Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-91-167
Wednesday
28 August 1991

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League's 'Abd-al-Majid Leaves for Libya

NC2708151491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1432 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 27 Aug (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid left Cairo for Tripoli this afternoon to attend the ceremonies marking the inauguration of the first stage of the Great Man-Made River project. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Greets Soviet Envoy in Tunis

LD2708195791 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Brother Abu-Ammar, president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, received this morning his excellency the ambassador of the Soviet Union in Tunis, who informed him of the latest developments in the Soviet Union. The brother president renewed his congratulations to President Gorbachev and wished him and the peoples of the Soviet Union success, so that we may continue together the joint action to achieve just and comprehensive peace in the region. He pointed to the importance of the urgent convening of the peace conference on the basis of international legitimacy and its resolutions.

Egyptian Paper Interviews 'Arafat

NC2808072291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2145 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Cairo, 27 Aug (MENA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH will publish an interview with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat in its Wednesday edition. During the interview, 'Arafat said: My relations with the Egyptian brothers, foremost of whom is President Husni Mubarak, are fraternal and good. I cherish these relations despite the clouds that gathered during the Gulf crisis.

One thing I know about myself is that I love Egypt, 'Arafat said, I have always had a certain emotional commitment toward Egypt and I still do. I have fought three times in my life, he added, twice for Egypt and once for Palestine; I am still fighting for Palestine.

'Arafat said: I am pleased that we coordinate and consult with our Egyptian brothers. I remember a recent statement by President Mubarak in which he said that he continues to support the Palestinian issue and insists on a comprehensive and just solution.

Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] welcomed the Egyptian position on eliminating weapons of mass destruction, noting that Egypt refuses to limit the dismantling of such weapons to Iraq, insisting that Israel's nuclear, bacterial, and chemical weapons be included in any regional disarmament plan.

'Arafat said that this official Egyptian position is in line with popular sentiment and testifies to Egypt's greatness and integrity, which we all respect.

The Palestinian president also hailed the Arab writers who defend Iraqi land and children.

'Arafat was questioned about his repeated rejection of the Camp David Accords despite the fact that Egypt has restored its land through this agreement without bloodshed and that the agreement opened the door to resolving the Palestinian issue. 'Arafat answered by saying: I know this. President Mubarak informed me of this and we fully understand it. There is one part of the Camp David Accords that deals with Egypt, and that part was implemented. There is also a part that deals with the Palestinian issue. I favor a comprehensive, just, and lasting peaceful solution; therefore, I see no reason to reopen the Camp David files. We have gone beyond that stage. The best proof for what I am saying is that since signing the accords, Egypt itself has exerted honest efforts to achieve a comprehensive and just solution.

Arab assistance to the PLO was halted three months prior to the Gulf war, 'Arafat said, adding: I call on Egypt, as the largest Arab country with basic responsibilities for the economy, Arab national security, and the Palestinian issue to provide more assistance to the PLO. Answering a question on the impact of the Gulf crisis on the PLO, 'Arafat said: Just as U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and General Schwartzkopf, commander of Desert Storm, have said, the entire Arab world has been influenced by this crisis.

Asked if the PLO reaped any benefits from its position on the Gulf war, 'Arafat said: We won our self-respect. We were opposed to the occupation of Kuwait and to striking Iraq. We tried to stop what happened from happening and we did lose quite a bit because any loss to the Arabs is a loss to the Palestinians. What is happening now in Kuwait and Iraq is a loss to the Palestinians as is the current Israeli intransigence.

Asked to give his reaction on the resentment felt by the Egyptian and Arab people on his Gulf war policies, 'Arafat said: Unfortunately our positions were distorted and misconstrued. The truth about our intentions, initiatives, and efforts was lost. We never stopped trying to achieve a peaceful solution to the crisis. Had even 1 percent of the efforts given to the military option been dedicated to reaching a peaceful solution, 'Arafat continued, I am sure such a solution would have been reached.

Would any Arab, the Palestinian president asked, accept Iranian and Turkish intervention inside Iraqi territory?

'Arafat compared the monetary assistance given to the PLO by the Gulf countries with that the same countries

have given to the Afghan mujahidin, noting that the total assistance given to the PLO since its establishment 27 years ago totals $2.2 billion, which breaks down to a yearly average of $75-$85 million. The Afghan mujahidin movement, on the other hand, collected $19.5 billion from the Gulf countries in just seven years, in grants, weapons, and private donations.

The Palestinian president was asked whether he now feels that he was deceived during the Gulf war and that he took the side of a dictator who rejects right and reason. 'Arafat answered by saying: We never agreed with the invasion of Kuwait and we called for a phased withdrawal of Iraqi forces. In addition, we persuaded [as received] Iraq not to insist on linking its withdrawal from Kuwait with Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories. We have called for resolving the Palestinian issue through an international conference. We called on Saddam Husayn not to link Kuwait and Palestine in practice; that is, to keep the link political.

You spent part of your youth in Kuwait, 'Arafat was asked, do you not feel indebted toward that country. He answered: Certainly. Kuwait is dear to me. That is why I called for a solution that did not involve war. I told the Kuwaitis that war would destroy the oil fields. Now they are losing $140 million of their national wealth a day. God only knows how long the fires will continue in Kuwait, he said, adding: This is why I hoped and worked for a peaceful solution. It is very hard for me to see the current destruction in Kuwait and Iraq.

Concerning the points of agreement between the PLO and the United States on the Palestinian issue, 'Arafat said that the U.S. position has endorsed the Israeli no's. We have approved the Bush plan, welcomed it, and consider it a positive step, 'Arafat said, but Israel has placed conditions that the U.S. Administration has accepted.

Asked about the points of agreement with the Israeli side, 'Arafat said: We disagree with Israel on everything because it is occupying our land. I have asked for one thing: A commitment to the principle of land for peace. I have asked for a commitment that UN Security Council Resolution 242 will be implemented. The resolution calls for the withdrawal of Israel from all Arab and Palestinian land, including Jerusalem, and the recognition of the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people. I am asking for a principled commitment concerning the implementation. The real problem is that Israel has imposed conditions on the proposals made by the U.S. President.

'Arafat was asked the best way to achieve the guarantees he is seeking on the conference, and he said: They [not further identified] should hand their commitments to the Arab League or to Egypt, which all sides trust.

Abu-'Ammar said that he is ready to endorse a joint Arab delegation to the peace talks headed by the Arab League, saying: This is a challenge I present to the world. 'Arafat recalled that the PLO had agreed to form a joint Arab delegation when attempts were made to revive the Geneva conference.

'Arafat was asked why, if he agrees to a confederation with Jordan, he is opposed to a confederation with Israel, to which he answered: Is there anyone prepared to join a confederation with those occupying his land? I am, however, willing to endorse a Palestinian-Israeli state of two communities and races like the situation in Belgium. Will Israel agree to that? If Israel agrees to this, we will welcome it unconditionally.

In conclusion, 'Arafat was asked who assassinated Salah Khalaf (Abu-Iyad) and Hayil 'Abd-al-Hamid (Abu-al-Hawl). 'Arafat replied: We have not reached a conclusion in this case and have conveyed that information to all who requested it. Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] is behind these crimes and behind him is the Israeli Mossad.

PLO, Hamas End 'Very Friendly' Talks

JN2808074091 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 28 Aug 91 p 23

[Text] Amman—AL-RA'Y—Following two rounds of talks over the past two days, the PLO and the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, agreed to hold further talks soon.

Members of the PLO committee, which was set up under Abu-'Ali Mustafa [Mustaf al-Zibri] to urge the Hamas movement to join the Palestine National Council [PNC], described the dialogue as very friendly and one which was permeated with frankness and objectivity.

They said that during the two meetings several important political topics concerning national unity, the next PNC session, and the political settlement were discussed.

Eng. Ibrahim Ghawshah, head of the Hamas delegation to the talks, said that the movement gave its opinion about the way the PNC should be formed through free, honest elections by the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territories.

He said that should this prove inapplicable, every faction should be represented in accordance with its weight and size in the Palestinian arena. He stressed that the criterion to determine that is elections.

He said: As for the settlement issue, the Hamas movement has asserted that among its constants is Palestinian territorial integrity and not relinquishing one iota of Palestinian soil.

The Hamas representative described what is being proposed through a regional conference as nothing more than direct negotiations to normalize relations between Israel and the Arab states and does not go beyond self-rule for the Palestinian people.

He said the Hamas movement recommends that this settlement be rejected. He urged continuation of the intifadah, which he described as the Palestinian jewel which should be maintained, supported, promoted, and cleared of its negative aspects.

Ahmad al-Jamal, member of the central committee of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine who took part in yesterday's meeting with the Hamas movement, stressed that the dialogue with Hamas will continue in order to coordinate and unite national efforts in resisting the occupation policy in the occupied homeland and to foil the U.S. Administration's attempts to circumvent the Palestinian people's unity and legitimate national rights.

Al-Jamal added that the PLO policy is based on resisting the U.S. plan, which denies the PLO right to take part in peace efforts and the peace conference in its capacity as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He said efforts will continue not only with Hamas, but also with parties to the [Palestinian National] Salvation Front and Islamic Jihad movement in order to rally all national resources and coordinate stands so as to be able to give the new PNC clear and tangible answers about the PLO's right to name its delegation to the peace conference from inside and outside the occupied territories, including Jerusalem and in accordance with bases that the PLO deems essential for any political settlement of the dispute, beginning with the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, demanding a halt to the illegitimate settlement activity, and ending with the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, repatriation, and the establishment of their independent state.

Editorial Views Repercussions of Soviet Events

TA2708153591 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 24 Aug 91 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "We Blame Others While the Fault Is in Us"]

[Text] The earthquake in the Soviet Union is over. In the scientific lexicon the quake's measurement on the Richter scale was very low; it caused only slight damage. In contrast, in the world of politics, what happened greatly reinforced the Soviet people's resolve to turn into an open society, enjoying freedom and democracy.

The hardliners in the Soviet Army and the Communist Party wanted to turn back the clock and return to the dictatorship the Soviet people experienced for over 70 years. During that period, the Soviet people were considered to be meek—receiving blows and leading a terrorized life, without embarking on any rebellion or rejectionist movement. Gorbachev's policy instilled a general feeling among the Soviet people that the dawn of freedom was emerging in their republics. It has been totally proven that those who sought to oppose that sweeping current were engaging in adventurism without paying heed to the changes brought about by Gorbachev. Thus, the adventure ended with failure.

Let us now go back to the repercussions of those events on our Arab nation. Some of us hastened to rejoice over what happened, and others felt that Gorbachev, who renounced his friendship with the Arabs, was ousted. Let us ask ourselves: If Gorbachev indeed renounced his friendship with the Arabs, what did the Soviet Union provide us in the pre-Gorbachev era for our nation's struggle to achieve its independence and its aspirations for freedom and the restoration of its rights? For that matter, was the group that staged the revolution going to give our nation more than what Gorbachev and his predecessors gave? This was definitely not going to happen, because countries have interests and those interests come first.

What has happened in the Soviet Union gives the Arab nations hope of taking their future and destinies in their own hands and of struggling for the liberation of Arab peoples, so that they may enjoy democracy and so that power will not be in the hands of regimes that suppress peoples, sometimes in the name of pan-Arabism, and at other times in the name of Islam. Who rules in the Kremlin is not as important as who rules in the Arab capitals. The freedom of the Arab individual is most important of all. Perhaps what happened in the Soviet Union will inspire us in the Arab world to respect human rights and look forward to establishing national democratic institutions that prevent the continuation of autocratic rule by rulers who regard themselves as trustees of this nation.

Some of us gloated over Gorbachev's overthrow partially because he did not aid Iraq in the conspiracy hatched against it by the West under the leadership of the United States. Before reproaching Gorbachev for his stand, we should ask: Why do we avoid facing reality? The West—the United States—with Soviet support managed to defeat us only after we refused to keep the discord inside the Arab home and only after some of us selfishly allied ourselves with America. Then the catastrophe occurred. After all this, do we have the right to reproach the Soviet leadership, whoever it might be, of abandoning us? Everyone knows that the fault is in us.

The coup's failure in the Soviet Union buried the ideas of the Communist hardliners forever. This has reinforced the change in the balance of power that followed the collapse of the communist bloc. The world is now being led by one superpower, the United States. Whether we like that or not, it is a reality to which we must adjust. Immense changes are taking place in the world around us. We have not been able, so far, to develop new concepts in our relations, even in inter-Arab relations; it is as if we are still living in ancient times. Europe will become one country next year, and Japan is continuing its technological progress. Our nation is not only standing still but retreating in leaps out of fear of the future.

We do not have time for foot-dragging and procrastination. Our nations fervently hope that their leaders will be able to overcome their differences and try to implement

a new order emanating from the will of the people, and not imposed on them by others—an order that puts the Arab nations on the same par with regard to their rights to freedom and progress; an order that respects the will of the Arab peoples, protects their private freedoms, respects human rights, and consolidates the foundations of democracy in the Arab world.

Editorials on Proposed Peace Conference

AL-QUDS Urges Joint Stance

TA2708162391 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 27 Aug 91 p 7

[Editorial: "The Palestinian-Jordanian Talks"]

[Text] The talks that Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat held with Jordan's King Husayn have proven that Palestinian-Jordanian relations are based on the mutual desire to maintain the decisionmaking independence of each side.

Jordan has officially affirmed that it will not negotiate on behalf of the Palestinian people and that its role will be limited to negotiating on Jordanian rights on borders, water, and security matters. This Jordanian emphasis very clearly reflects equal relations and mutual respect, as well as frankness and candor on the different issues.

It is no secret to anyone that the United States, through the trips to the region by Secretary of State James Baker, sees in the formation of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation a mechanism that might circumvent the Israeli conditions, particularly those about ruling out PLO participation in the peace process and excluding Jerusalem's Arab residents from the proposed peace conference.

The PLO's stance on the decision by U.S. President George Bush and his Soviet counterpart, Mikhail Gorbachev, to invite the parties in the conflict to a peace conference in October has become clear to the entire world. The Palestinian side is still awaiting official, written U.S. replies on a considerable number of substantive issues.

In light of the conditions that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has attached to his consent to attend the peace conference, there is now an urgent need to determine the U.S. position on the means of implementing Security Council Resolution 242—namely, Israel's withdrawal from the Arab and Palestinian lands occupied since 1967. The same applies to its position on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, their right to select their representatives, and the inadmissibility of excluding Arab Jerusalem—issue and representatives—from the various stages of the peace process.

The establishment of a unified Arab position to aid the Palestinian people and their leadership is logically considered the first step of Arab diplomacy. In light of the developments in international relations, the Palestinian-Jordanian talks should constitute an opening for convening a mini-Arab summit comprising Egypt, Syria, Jordan, the PLO, and Lebanon.

What is required now is establishing the firm foundation of a joint Arab stance. If this is not realized, and if the peace conference begins, the Arab negotiator will be in a completely unenviable position.

U.S. Pressure on Israel Urged

TA2708190391 Jerusalem AL-SHA'B in Arabic 27 Aug 91 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "Palestinian Representation Between 'Understanding' and 'Intent'"]

[Text] The visible American treatment of Israel with regard to convening the peace conference in October indicates that the U.S. Administration is intent on pursuing its policies of appeasement. Those policies allowed Israel's leaders to strengthen their intransigence and inflexibility and provided them with a strong incentive to continue implementing Israeli plans across the length and width of Arab land. The United States failed to effect any change in the Israeli stance on issues over which Washington has more than once expressed its displeasure, despite its awareness that those policies, especially the settlement policy, represent an insurmountable obstacle on the road to peace.

It was disclosed yesterday in Washington that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker may embark on his eighth visit to the region, to put the finishing touches on efforts to convoke the peace conference in OStober, and to try to remove the Israeli obstacles placed on the path to that conference.

Since it is unable to budge Israel away from its rigid position and, consequently, unable to respond to the Palestinian demands for drafting a written memorandum of understanding between the two sides based on international legitimacy, the U.S. Administration is trying to replace the memorandums of understanding with "letters of intent." The U.S. Administration is seeking, through those letters, to back away from implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy and to circumvent those resolutions by playing with words and formulations. Ultimately, the letters of intent will not be able to set matters right should Israel embark on violating what was agreed on in any stage of the negotiations.

Instead of pursuing its policies of appeasement toward Israel, the U.S. Administration must show a seriousness indicating to the Palestinian and Arab side that there is a U.S. readiness to have Israel comply with the resolutions of international legitimacy, because it is aware that the dreams of a comprehensive and lasting peace in the region will remain subject to the extent of the U.S. Administration's ability to pressure Israel, to the latter's response to the

requirements of peace, and to Israel's renunciation of its positions that defy the international will.

Without this, neither the memorandums of understanding nor the letters of intent can bring about the required progress in the peace process. Peace requires applying real pressure on the side that rejects the international will. In the absence of this pressure, talk about peace will remain in the realm of wishes that neither achieve peace nor restore rights that have been denied.

Algeria

Release for People Detained Without Evidence

LD2708203791 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] The military authorities in charge of administering the state of siege announce that, in line with the directives of the prime minister regarding the procedures for releasing persons held in security centers, and in view of the easing of the emergency and the necessary nature of this means [as heard] for the establishment of public order and security, it has been decided, as from 27 August 1991, to release those persons still in security centers against whom no sufficient evidence has been gathered for imprisoning them through the courts.

The closure of security centers takes effect from 30 August 1991. The perpetrators of offenses concerning public security will be turned over to the specialized legal bodies, whether within the framework of the penal code or in accordance with the emergency measures stipulated by the decrees instituting the state of emergency.

Lift of State of Siege Slated Before Campaigns

LD2608210791 Algiers APS in English 1006 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Algiers, August 26 (APS)—The new version of electoral laws will be submitted to all political parties "within a week for a last consultation before its submission to the National People's Assembly (APN), announced Sunday to APS minister in charge of relations with political associations and the APN Abu Bakr Belkaid.

The two draft bills due to be elaborated on the basis of important tendencies brought out at the last meeting, will be subject to consultation with all parties either under the form of direct contracts by "political family" or the form of written answers, Belkaid pointed out.

So that elections can occur before the end of the year the government has not more than ten days to organize consultation and submit the draft bills to the APN. Furthermore, Belkaid noted all conditions will be gathered to insure [as received] a political climate "favorable" to organize "clean and honest" elections.

Asked about the raising of the state of siege, claimed by the majority of parties, the minister assured that it will take place before the beginning of the electoral campaign adding that the state of siege has never thwarted the democratic process but it is a constitutional measure that does protect it.

While evaluating results of the last government-parties meeting Belkaid stated that they were positive with the "very significant" participation of parties and their concern to privilege dialogue. This, said he, will contribute to facilitate the task of the government that has now all elements necessary to elaborate an electoral project corresponding to the expectation of the society.

Egypt

Foreign Minister on USSR, Gulf Security

NC2708154091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1400 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Cairo, 27 Aug (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that Egypt will not act hastily in formulating its position on the declaration of independence by the three Baltic republics of Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia. He added that Egypt will determine its stand in light of what the USSR decides and future developments.

In a meeting with reporters today, 'Amr Musa noted that Egypt is closely following the relations between the USSR and its republics, regardless of whether they take the form of continuing union or independence for the republics. He affirmed that Egypt will support whatever decision is reached.

He added: We are following these developments with interest and will decide our stand accordingly.

He went on to explain that Egypt prefers to wait until things settle down before making any decision and emphasized that Egypt is concerned about Soviet stability and will not intervene in the USSR's internal affairs. He said that the current events in the USSR are of great importance in view of this country's position and its influence on regional and international affairs, noting that what happens there inevitably affects the entire world, for good or ill. He expressed his belief, nevertheless, that the recent events in the USSR will not adversely affect the Middle East peace process. He said he assumes that the USSR will continue to play its international role and not abandon its diplomatic activity.

Musa told reporters that international developments have created a world with a "single superpower," but added that this does not mean that there is any less interest in the other major powers which play important and influential roles.

He stressed that Egypt maintains a good and positive relationship with the United States and referred to the mutual appreciation and cooperation between the two countries. He pointed out that the current initiative on Middle East peace is "a U.S. initiative," adding that he believes that beginning the Middle East peace process will lead to a just and balanced peace settlement.

The foreign minister went on to say that the current trend is for holding a peace conference to be attended by all parties concerned with the Middle East crisis. He said that Egypt believes the negotiations at the conference will be conducted in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 242, which rejects the seizure of

territory by force and affirms the right of all countries of the region to live within secure borders. He stressed the importance of an active and influential Egyptian role in order to safeguard Arab and regional interests.

On the subject of joint Arab action, Musa stressed the importance of the Arab League Council meeting to be held in Cairo on 10 September. He said this meeting "indicates the return of the Arab system in a new, positive atmosphere that unanimously rejects any aggression by Arabs against other Arabs." The foreign minister expressed his hope that it will be possible to "close Arab ranks" during the meeting and to create a willingness to contribute to the new world order, adding that it is important that all Arab foreign ministers attend.

Commenting on the coordination of positions among the eignt signatories of the Damascus Declaration, Minister Musa said that the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, and the Gulf Cooperation Council member states may hold consultations on the sidelines of the upcoming Arab League Council meeting. He added that the implementation of Damascus Declaration will be launched at a special meeting to be held in September or October.

On the question of Gulf security, Musa said that this must be seen as part of overall Arab security, emphasizing that no security arrangements are possible except on the basis of such Arab agreements as the Arab League Charter, the Joint Defense Pact, and the Damascus Declaration.

He said that we should try to implement these agreements properly, faithfully, and honestly, as it was not the agreements themselves that were flawed but rather their implementation. The foreign minister emphasized that these conventions should be respected.

Minister Musa said that it is unthinkable that any kind of security system can be imposed on the Gulf region, as this system should be the product of agreement. He said that no security system can exclude Egypt or be formulated without consulting it. The foreign minister noted that no security system can be stable and successful without Egypt.

Musa did not rule out the possibility that neighboring countries, such as Iran, would be consulted in this regard. He added, however: These countries can hear the Arab and Egyptian point of view and we can listen to theirs, but it must be clear that Gulf security and Arab security are indivisible.

'Amr Musa noted that he will lead the Egyptian delegation to the meeting of the nonaligned foreign ministers to be held in Accra 3-6 September.

The Egyptian foreign minister said that the Nonaligned Movement should adapt to the new international conditions. He added that Egypt will present to the conference a proposal to merge the Nonaligned Movement with the Group of 77 economic grouping so as to create an international forum representing Third World views. He added that Third World countries should have a conceptual framework to inspire their actions, as otherwise they will become passive spectators of world events.

The Egyptian foreign minister said that this task is the responsibility of leading Third World countries such as Egypt, India, Pakistan, Brazil, Argentina, Indonesia, and others.

Minister Musa concluded his remarks by saying that the United Nations will play a major role in leading the new international order, for this organization seeks to implement the will of the international community, of which the Third World is part.

Musa on Israeli Policy, Iraq, Role in Gulf

NC2708114291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0750 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Beirut, 27 Aug (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa reiterated that Egypt will never relinquish Jerusalem and that it will never acknowledge Israel's unilateral measures in the occupied Arab territories, particularly the ever-expanding settlement process which so far has devoured 65 percent of the occupied territories. He stressed that these measures are illegal and do not restrict anyone.

In an interview with the Lebanese newspaper AL-LIWA' published today, the foreign minister pointed out that President Mubarak adopted a clear-cut stand on recent events in the Soviet Union by declaring his support for legitimacy and for the system chosen by the Soviet people.

'Amr Musa asserted that Egypt is dealing with Iraq based on fixed principles. Acting on these principles, he said, Egypt does not accept Iraq's partition, insists on its territorial integrity, and will never tolerate the starvation of the Iraqi people or accept any foreign conspiracy against them, in the same way it has not accepted the Iraqis' subjugation to injustice by their ruler.

Minister Musa added that a Middle East security system can only be established after finding a just and radical solution for the Palestinian problem so stability can be restored to the region.

Touching on the Gulf security system, Minister Musa asserted that Egypt takes part in that system out of its sense of responsibility as the region's largest state, which has an effective role to play. He added, however, that this security system must be worked out through a mutual agreement and a purposeful dialogue which envisages the higher pan-Arab interests and accords with the Arab League Charter. [passage indistinct]

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Claims UK's Major Lacks Courage

LD2708231191 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1937 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Interview with Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi by unidentified BBC correspondent at Baninah Airport on 27 August; Al-Qadhdhafi and correspondent speak in English—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] From the BBC, can I ask you [word indistinct] questions? What does it mean to you, all these heads of state coming to Banghazi, the opening of the Great Manmade River project? What does it mean to you in your country?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] It means that Libya is not isolated, as they say in the West [words indistinct].

[Correspondent] But a number of people you invited, like British Prime Minister John Major, decided not come to this ceremony. What does that mean to you?

[Al-Qadhdhafi] They afraid of America, and that is it. He wishes to come, but he is afraid. He has no enough courage to come. [Al-Qadhdhafi and audience laugh]

Iraqi Delegation Arrives for Waterway Ceremony

LD2708191391 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1855 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Banghazi, 27 Aug, JANA—Iraqi Vice President Brother Taha Yasin Ramadan and the delegation accompanying him arrived this evening at Baninah International Airport to take part in the Libyan Arab people's celebrations of the arrival of the waters of the Great Manmade River to Siluq reservoir. [passage omitted]

Al-Qadhdhafi Meets Mubarak on Arrival in Tripoli

NC2708173591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1728 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Tripoli, 27 Aug (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak arrived in Tripoli tonight to take part in the Libyan people's celebrations marking the inauguration of the first stage of the Great Manmade River and the anniversary of al-Fatih revolution.

Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, welcomed Mubarak at the airport.

Mubarak, al-Qadhdhafi Remarks

NC2708205791 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak arrived in the Libyan Jamahiriyah tonight to attend the celebrations marking the inauguration of the Great Manmade River. He was welcomed at the airport by brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, and the thousands of Libyans who had gathered to greet him.

President Mubarak and Col. al-Qadhdhafi spoke to Egyptian, Libyan, and foreign correspondents at Banghazi airport. President Mubarak started out by congratulating the brother colonel and the Libyan people on the achievement represented by the Great Manmade River. President Mubarak said that this great project testifies to the strides that have been taken to enhance the quality of life, and we share the Libyans' joy over it. I believe this great undertaking will bring progress and prosperity to Libya, and to Egypt as well.

Brother Col. al-Qadhdhafi said that the manmade river proves the Libyan people's determination to achieve development and progress.

Concerning the prospects for holding the peace conference in October, Mubarak said: We hope the peace conference will be held in October. Our aim is to achieve a just peace.

Brother Col. al-Qadhdhafi said that the steps taken regarding Egyptian-Libyan cooperation are promising. Our future, he said, is being decided by the masses in Egypt and Libya.

Mubarak also commented on the issue of closing Arab ranks. He said: We spent many years trying to promote Arab solidarity. Then the Gulf crisis took us by surprise and produced its known results. Ultimately, we will be close again; it is just a matter of time. We hope no one creates any new problems. Mubarak said that the Gulf crisis did not generate animosity among Arabs, but involved a dispute over principles and caused problems that are still unresolved. One day these problems will disappear and the desired Arab solidarity will be achieved, Mubarak asserted.

Concerning the future of unity, brother Col. al-Qadhdhafi said that unity is inevitable. The Arab masses will realize this unity regardless of the obstacles, he added.

Daniel Ortega Arrives for Celebrations

LD2808080191 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 2315 GMT 26 Aug 91

[Text] Daniel Ortega, leader of the Sandinist Front of Nicaragua, arrived in Tripoli yesterday evening to join the Libyan Arab people in their great celebrations to mark the arrival of the water of the Great Manmade River to Suluk reservoir in Banghazi municipality and the 22d anniversary of the Great 1 September Revolution.

Sudan

Armed Forces Statement on Failed 'Coup Attempt'

EA2708183391 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Aug 91

[Text] Major General Muhammad Abdullah Uwaydah, the official Armed Forces spokesman, made the following statement: Just as the policies of the revolution have begun to proceed toward achieving peace in the combat zones, uniting the internal front, expanding the participation base and spreading tolerance through the release of detainees, the remnants of the moribund sectarianism and some former dismissed military men, who have no other concern except the lust for power, strove to incite some of the military to take part in a reckless coup attempt at the instigation and financing of some foreign powers. This desperate group has been under strict surveillance from the beginning. The security organs believed that sedition should be destroyed in the cradle. Therefore ten active service officers, some retired officers and a small group of civilians, were arrested.

An investigation of the accused has begun and their statements revealed the full extent of the evil design. Those against whom there is no complete evidence will be released, but those charged will be tried as soon as the investigations are complete.

Western Sahara

Polisario Claims To Seek Peace Despite Attacks

LD2708202291 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] According to the Polisario, Moroccan forces are again bombing Sahrawi areas. Although there have been dead and wounded and some people have fled, the Polisario is saying: I refuse to violate the cease-fire. Perez de Cuellar, for his part, has changed from pessimistic to optimistic. Here is Mohamed Abbad:

[Abbad] In a statement published today, the Polisario front pointed out that the Moroccan Air Force has again bombed the town of Tefariti, killing five persons and wounding at least 20 others, and causing 10,000 inhabitants of the area to flee.

Despite that, the Polisario front has stressed that the Sahrawi Liberation Army is continuing to respect the truce, which was organized by the United Nations to pave the way for a cease-fire on 6 September. However, the Polisario has threatened to use its right to defend itself in the event of the continuation of the Moroccan attack.

The attack has been described by the Moroccan newspaper AL-BAYAN as a mere mopping-up operation in no-man's-land, which the Polisario had tried to control before the arrival of the UN mission, according to the paper. However, Polisario's representative in Algeria, Ibrahim Hakim, sees in this attack an attempt to sidetrack the UN peace plan from its objectives and to remove the substance of a peaceful solution, especially given that Morocco last week requested the postponement of the referendum, which is set for next January.

OAU Secretary General Salim Ahmad Salim yesterday called for a halt to the battles in order to pave the way for the implementation of the UN plan. Another call for the two protagonists to prevent the escalation of the situation was made today by UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar. He expressed relative optimism concerning the implementation of the peaceful solution.

Perez de Cuellar today held contacts with the Moroccan authorities and spoke to the Spanish foreign minister. He also received in Geneva Bachir Mustafa Sayed, the Polisario Front's official in charge of foreign relations. The Sahrawi official described the audience as constructive and said that the opportunities for peace are still open.

Polisario Group Meets UN Secretary General

LD2708154891 Paris Radio France International in French 1200 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Excerpt] It is difficult this morning to have a precise idea of the situation on the ground in the Western Sahara. The Polisario Front speaks of further bombing raids, which have caused five deaths. The Polisario's office in Madrid specifies that the town of Tifariti has been destroyed by the Air Force.

During this time, United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar was meeting a delegation of the Polisario, led by Bachir Mustapha Sayed, in Geneva. The tone was apparently more optimistic and the remarks less alarmist than yesterday. Bachir Mustapha Sayed spoke to (Laurent Bonna) at the end of his meeting:

[Begin Sayed recording] The Polisario emerges from this very frank, very cordial, very constructive meeting strengthened in its conviction that the chances for peace and the prospects for a peaceful solution are still open and are still concrete. Thus, the Polisario Front remains attached to the plan and will do everything it can to honor the crucial deadlines of this peace plan, in particular honoring 6 September as the date of the cease-fire proclamation. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Writer Defends Normalized Relations With U.S.

JN2708150991 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic
25 Aug 91 p 3

[Article by Sabah Salman: "Another Look at the Normalization of Iraqi-U.S. Relations"]

[Text] Once again I would like to discuss the normalization of Iraqi-U.S. relations. The reason is that my first article on the subject, which appeared in BABIL on 15 August, has prompted opposing reactions. I think this is ironic. The article came under a double-barreled attack: Some gunners, considered to be pro-Iraqi, shelled the article with relentless bombs, and, in addition, the burning fire of rockets from Iraq's enemies reached every single line of the article!

The result is that the "tabooed" subject came under crossfire. Nevertheless, talk about normalization of Iraqi-U.S. relations remains necessary. I am not alarmed by the fact that discussing the subject means entering the danger zone and facing dangerous logic, just like entering a prohibited area.

The newspaper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT and the "Iraqi opposition" radio talked about the article in a manner that burned the entire article and its very idea. What makes this less powerful, however, is that what they said was expected, and theirs was not the first fire the enemies directed against me!

But the other fire, which came from the "masters of exaggerated patriotism," was meant to portray its igniters as the priests of the "sacred fire" or the bearers of the torches of freedom, principles, and faith. The fact, however, is that their fire is like a spark in the oil fields!

Why? Politics is the art of the possible. The road to this is objective reading and scientific analysis of things and a practical approach to them. Otherwise, fulfilling objectives would be a figment of the imagination, or a summer night's dream!

The problem is that the world of the possible does not have a bridge linking it to the illusions flying over the clouds, nor a language through which it can communicate with the visions in sleepy eyes!

Moreover, after all that has happened, "faithfulness" cannot be expressed through practicing one-upmanship or the burning of incense. Reality gave enough evidence that one-upmanship is a source of trouble and plagues. Experience has showed that burning incense produces nothing more than scent and smoke. Indeed, the scent is not appealing to the nose, and the smoke hurts the eyes!! The time of incense has gone; it has been replaced by other fragrances: useful words void of charlatanism, hypocrisy, exaggeration, or excessiveness.

I am, therefore, looking for the roots of hope in the ground, not for their wings in the sky!

Thus, the advocates of "principles," whose calls cost them nothing but words from a tongue unaware of consequences or a pen not appreciative of responsibility, are advocates of hallucination, at best. Their delirium is more of a cloudy talkativeness and intrigued lines; and their concern about "principles" is, at best, being played on broken strings!

I have played a guitar which I tuned very carefully, and called for normalizing Iraqi-U.S. relations. What made me more convinced of the soundness of my call was the fact that the reactions to what I wrote were very shallow. To be fair, the only mature, deep, and comprehensive reply concerning the subject I raised arrived in the mail from Geneva, in the form of a cable from Barzan al-Takriti, Iraq's envoy at the European headquarters of the United Nations. I wish I could publish that reply, but I cannot because of certain considerations which I must appreciate.

Therefore, I insist on my call despite what has been, or is being said by those affiliated to this or that trend. I continue to walk in the prohibited zone without paying attention to the barbed wire, the many mine fields, and the bombs falling here and there.

My insistence does not echo another voice that has called for, or signaled, the approach of normalization. Nor is it mere intransigence in the face of those who oppose the idea. I insist on it because I believe that the call is useful and sound to the extent that makes me accept being exposed to the arrows of the shortsighted and shallow-minded ones, both faithful and infidels, who exercise one-upmanship.

There are many reasons for this. I am one of the people who believe that normalization is in the interest of the country, regardless of the history of Arab-U.S. relations in general, and Iraqi-U.S. relations in particular, and despite everything that has happened. This is because the facts of the age and the developments give that call its practical justification and rational basis. Those who turn a blind eye to the rational and practical justifications are no different from those who laugh at funerals and cry at weddings.

Also, why should normalization be understood as a sacrificing of principles or a forgetting of sacrifices? If this was the case—as those overzealous people understand it—then I can say for myself that I am, regrettably, an ordinary citizen, who believes that true patriotism means considering the country's interest in accordance with objective judgments and rational prerequisites. I also understand that patriotism is not necessarily expressed through loud talk, clamor, or uproar, but by calm, objective, and wise talk. I also believe that the bitter word of truth is much better than the sweet word of falsehood.

In light of this, I would like to say why I call for the normalization of Iraqi-U.S. relations. I do not want to repeat what I said in my previous article on the same subject, because repeating things will do no good.

Repeating things is the worst thing that could happen to anyone's writing, and makes that writing fall into a world of nonsense and meaningless words. This I do not like, not for myself, nor for what I write.

Therefore, I say let us agree on one important point: We live in a critical phase which requires careful differentiation between the poison and the medicine.

The challenge is a major and serious one, and the storm is still very strong. One must stand in the face of the strong wind, provided it does not uproot all trees. One might say "but trees die standing." I accept this in two cases: If it comes to dignity, which we would rather take with us in our coffins, or if those who say this are among the first of the "trees that die standing" and not the ones who trade in their wood.

Therefore, flexibility in politics and realistic, objective, and rational dealing with its problems demonstrate, in a way, concern, loyalty, and full responsibility. Otherwise, rigidity, which means a separation from life, will lead to defeat.

Thus, the desire to get out of the dark tunnel means one has to search for the ray of light and not wait for the sun to shine, because, regrettably, the sun does not reach into closed holes. I, therefore, believe in the Chinese proverb which says: "Instead of cursing darkness, light one candle." I want the candle I am trying to light to dispel darkness and not start a fire.

I also am aware that to swim against the current is sometimes necessary as it demonstrates how capable and dexterous the swimmer is. However, it is not possible at all times. From this premise, I agree to swimming in a raging sea if this will bring us to safe shores. But I will agree to swimming that could lead to drowning only if there is someone on the opposite shore who seeks my death in a humiliating manner.

That is why the call for the normalization of relations is neither a cheap deal, a suspect bargain, or even a mistake within the framework of dealings among countries, or a sin in bilateral relations. On the contrary, it is a sign of health and an indication of normalcy in international relations. Anything else is wrong, anomalous, and a sign of the deteriorating relations among nations.

My problem is that I like to call a spade a spade, and to proclaim what I believe is sound and fruitful while others get annoyed when someone dots the i's or expresses what he really has in mind. That is why I do not like to philosophize on things or fool people. From this premise, I explicitly call for the normalization of Iraqi-U.S. relations because, irrespective of the magnitude of the differences, my call is a responsible and constructive one as it is the right course which will lead to direct meetings and exchanges of opinion among the parties concerned. Viewpoints and stands communicated through third parties are not always as accurate as desired or as needed, because these third parties are merely working as mailmen or as good intentioned go-betweens. Major crises do not require go-betweens, but rather the people directly concerned with the crisis since they alone are the only ones qualified to conduct an open and responsible dialogue and to reach decisions when needed.

In saying so, I do not want to slam the door in the face of good offices and well-intentioned efforts. What I would like to point out is only that in crises such as these, it is best for the parties concerned to be the first ones involved in them. Also, I believe that with respect to all the parties, normalization now is better than tomorrow. Anyone who believes the opposite will find at one time or another that any delay is harmful to both parties, because it will be a wasted opportunity that has not been grasped.

In addition to this, the policy of severing relations among countries has no benefits, and closed embassies do not mean that this or that country has gained something. Also, interests sections are in embassies that fly the flags of other countries. That is why normal relations are better than severed ones. I will be grateful for anyone who can produce convincing arguments disproving what I say, but on the condition of not resorting to the logic of resounding slogans. Such slogans are no longer of any use in the field of political action. I will even dare to say that people get annoyed by them and are shunning them. These slogans have been exhausted to the point that the people view them as empty words, mere acts of one-upmanship.

The truth is that the era of resounding slogans has ended and has been replaced by logic and constructive dialogue, because slogans used to produce nothing more than anger in the streets and the squares which evaporated as soon as the marchers ended their marches and the demonstrators dispersed.

People no longer are willing to accept these resounding slogans which have become mere screams and shrieks.

I swear by God that screams and shrieks are harmful and not beneficial...!!!

'Uday Saddam Husayn on Democracy, USSR

JN2808085191 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic
26 Aug 91 p 1

[Article by 'Uday Saddam Husayn: "Our Course..."]

[Text] We would like to indicate at the beginning of this article that we deemed it wise not to talk about our policy in this newspaper or our press activity until the policy is discerned by the readers themselves as well as by observers and others.

Today we cannot talk about all the dimensions and methods of our thinking or the path we are seriously pursuing, but will talk about some of them.

Let us ask if Iraq or the Arab homeland is really in need of democracy as much as the chauvinist, Western, or

communist countries need it...?! We will not go deeply into details, but will talk about simple facts from which many things can be inferred.

Democracy for us, as an Arab nation that believes in the Islamic religion, has been imposed on us. We have to respond to it not because of domestic influences within our countries, but because of what is happening in the outside world. Although we are independent of this world, there are certainly threads linking us to it. How would it be, then, when there are interests and quarters that work to shake the stability of your country, and quarters that wickedly plan to make gains or rob the future of the country from the hands of its people and embroil it in foreign schemes.

Moreover, we have many students who studied abroad, both in the East and West. We also have many thinkers who do not rely in their thinking on true Arab and Islamic principles, but Western and Eastern ideas. Some of them believe in communism and others in capitalism or the experiments of various countries.

When we say that democracy does not represent a basic need, this does not mean that our minds are fossilized or that we are trying to evade democratic thinking. The holy Koran and the prophet's teachings represent the peak of democracy once we comprehend them well. How would things be if we add to them Nahj al-Balaghah [Art of Rhetoric] by Imam 'Ali, may God bless him, and the justice of Caliph 'Umar Bin-al-Khattab, may God bless him, when he asked the Muslims to show him whatever mistakes he made and when a Muslim responded by telling him: Had we found any crookedness in you we would have corrected it with our swords?

Another example among many others is Imam 'Ali's saying: I wish I had a camel's neck. By this he means he would take his time to think before uttering something. This is one aspect of elevated democracy because straining oneself before uttering words that spring from one's thinking is an advanced method of broad human exchange with a larger group.

We fear that democracy will be used destructively as was the case when the 'Abd-al-Nasir era was attacked and when most of Egypt's major writers visited Israel, which is responsible for the suffering of the Palestinian Arab people and the nation. Most of these writers sold themselves to the United States and many of them shifted from commendation to condemnation of 'Abd-al-Nasir's era.

Another basic and definite thing is that we, as highbred students and honorable Iraqis—regardless of the fact that we are the sons of the march of leader Saddam Husayn and great Iraq—should enhance this march and rid it of any possible negative aspects.

We fully believe that in the post-Saddam Husayn era and under the pretext of freedom of press and democracy some will deliberately do similar things to those that took place in Egypt.

What is miserable about democracy is that it has gone beyond defamation to destruction, as is happening in the Soviet Union now under the pretext of democracy. The Soviet Union has ended as a superpower and has begun to seek the assistance of foreign banks after it used to finance and aid the East European and other countries. It turned from a country whose word and opinion were heard into a satellite country which, under the pretext of democracy, liquidated all former symbols that laid down the bases of its construction and development. To kill your thinkers is the crime of the age because it means that you lead your nation into a whirlpool or a corridor with a dark end. You will not know what will meet you there at the end. A small scorpion may sting you to death or you may fall into a deadly pit. All these will lead to certain death.

The democracy that we want, based on our Arab and Islamic history, is not democracy for defamation or democracy for destruction. We want it to be a basis for correcting what is wrong, and not for entrenching the negative points so as to make use of them in the future and to make the situation more miserable.

I, and a group of youths, from among those who work with me on the editorial staff or the board of directors, who have the same way of thinking, have met and preferred to go to the press, although we had the choice not to go to the press, so as to maintain our prestige and the others' respect for us, and to avoid losing some people with whom we might clash within the framework of public interest, and whom we might not meet in our private life.

Had we been seekers of glory and renown, then there are better ways than the press to achieve this. We repeat and reiterate, however, as we said before, that in the press one can have many rewards from God, and from people, even if you cannot feel these, but you build something great inside them.

These reasons, which are part of our principles, the principles of the honest Iraqis, have made us clash with others, and made the "suspect radios" attack us as persons, sometimes directly. However, this is a great honor for us.

For example, so that talk will not continue to be mere talk, sometimes, even when we do not believe that a certain issue is right, we compel ourselves to believe in what the majority believes right. I, personally, disagree with the idea that the public knows its interests better than any other party. No, let us see how the situation of the public became in the Soviet Union. If we reach the conclusion that the public is well aware of its interests, then there is no need for a leadership, and everyone will be left to act in his own way. Moreover, there will be no need for prophets or messengers who represent the "elite," which is the example that others follow, and there will be no need for Imams and scholars, thus the factors of stability in life will become similar in degree

beginning with the single element to the large structure. This could make everything in life lose its specific scope.

As we know in chemistry and physics, everything is general if we do not put it within a scope that restricts and regulates its movement and size, otherwise it might assume another shape that is smaller than its previous shape, or might become confused and scattered in space.

Back again to the main reason: In harmony with the desire, which we found to be a great desire, and so that we will not reach a point of disagreement, but a kind of dialogue that we need in our life, we published an opinion by a "journalist" on the "free opinions" page last Thursday [22 August]. Although we know his press background, we preferred to publish it. Today, BABIL, on completion of this article that sheds light on our press policy and democratic views, will publish remarks about this journalist on page four so as to make him unable to win a group of people that we might lose, and losing these people could be detrimental to the public good. While publishing our remarks about this person, we ask the reader to be the judge.

Foreign Ministry Source on UN Aid Program

JN2708160491 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First Program Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] A responsible source at the Foreign Ministry has asserted that the total amount of aid provided by the UN humanitarian program to Iraq since the end of the 30-state aggression last February has not amounted to one tenth of 1 percent of the Iraqi people's real needs.

In a statement to INA, the responsible source said that some UN relief committees distributed quantities of bad rice in al-Sulaymaniyah and Irbil governorates last July. After following up on this, the report has been confirmed. It also became clear to us that some foreign relief organizations distributed quantities of bad rice to citizens in the areas of Raniyah and Banjwin. Samples of this rice have been collected.

He explained that the minister of state for foreign affairs summoned (Masa Motto), assistant to the UN humanitarian program coordinator, currently in Iraq, and briefed him on the details of this subject. He also asked him to conduct an urgent investigation to ascertain further details. He expressed his concern over these actions, which run contrary to the memorandum of understanding signed with the United Nations on 18 April 1991, which expires on 31 December.

The source affirmed that Iraq has shown complete cooperation with the United Nations and its specialized agencies taking part in the UN humanitarian program in Iraq, despite the tiny amount of aid provided by this program. He indicated that the UN officials working in Iraq agree with us in our estimate of the real amount of the UN humanitarian program. It is a very tiny amount when compared to the basic needs of Iraqi society.

The source added: The only solution to meet the needs of the Iraqi people is to lift the unjust economic siege. Despite our respect for some of the relief programs and other programs, under no circumstances can we weaken the urgency of our demands to lift the economic siege imposed on Iraq.

Concluding his statement, the responsible source said: Making public the true size of the aid program, which is very small, is a necessary move so that these programs cannot be used as a pretext to sedate the world and Arab public opinion, which is now demanding an end to the unjust economic siege against Iraq.

RCC Passes Law Establishing Relief Fund

JN2808123491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1050 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Aug (INA)—The Revolution Command Council has approved a law providing for the establishment of a fund for the relief of those harmed during the U.S.-Atlantic aggression against Iraq and the incidents of treachery and sabotage that took place in a number of governorates.

The first article in the law indicates that the relief fund has a legal status and an independent financial entity which qualify it to possess movable and immovable property through fund raising and grants from inside and outside Iraq.

The law stipulates that this fund shall be financed through a state grant, donations, grants, legacies, welfare lotteries, welfare bazaars and auctions, or any other sources proposed by the central authority for the administration of the relief fund and approved by the Council of Ministers.

According to the law, management of the fund is to be entrusted to an authority called the Central Authority for the Administration of the Relief Fund. The authority will be headed by the minister of labor and social affairs and will comprise the under secretary of the Finance Ministry, who is to replace the chairman in his absence; representatives from the Ministries of Interior, Labor and Social affairs, Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Health, Agriculture and Irrigation, and Industry and Minerals; representatives from the executive council of the autonomous region; a judge to be nominated by the justice minister; and a representative from the Iraqi Red Crescent Society. An officer to be nominated by the minister of labor and social affairs shall be in charge of the secretariat of the committee.

The law stipulates that a committee will be set up in the capital city of each governorate. This committee will be called the Committee for the Relief of Those Harmed. It will be chaired by the governor and will comprise a judge who is at least a grade three judge; representatives from the Ministries of Finance, Labor and Social affairs, and Awqaf and Religious Affairs; three governorate notables; and a representative for the general secretariat of the

financial and economic affairs administration in the autonomous region governorates. The committee is entitled to seek the assistance of one or more experts specializing in damage assessment.

The law defines the tasks of the central authority of the relief fund administration by setting rules to determine how to assess the damage and the percentage of relief to the harmed citizens, to endorse, amend, or cancel the decisions made by the relief committees in the governorates, to decide on the harmed persons' objections to decisions made by the relief committees, and to organize humanitarian campaigns to collect donations and grants, to establish welfare markets and auctions, to organize the fund's financial and administrative affairs, and to prepare the necessary reports in this regard.

The law explains the tasks of the committees formed in the governorates. These tasks include acceptance of the applications of harmed people or their beneficiaries, specification and confirmation of the harm, and the assessment of the sums that should be paid, providing that these committees commence their procedures in this regard within 15 days of the date of submitting the application, and forward their decisions to the central authority of the relief fund administration within 30 days of the date of informing the applicant.

The law allows the harmed person or his beneficiaries to contest to the central authority of the fund administration the committees' decisions, within 30 days of the date of his being informed, especially since the central authority's decision is considered decisive. In addition to this, the committees should pay the relief sum to the harmed person after the approval of the central authority of the fund administration.

The relief aid stipulated by this law covers the harm resulting from death and partial or total incapacity [words indistinct], providing that applications be submitted within six months of the date of the enforcement of this law.

The law calls on the specialized banks, the real estate, agricultural, and industrial banks to give preference in granting loans to those covered by the provisions of this law through coordination with the central authority of the relief fund administration.

The law authorizes the central authority of the relief fund to issue the necessary instructions to facilitate the implementation of the provisions of this law.

The aim of this law is to provide relief to every Iraqi citizen who was harmed by the 30-state aggression and the incidents of treachery and treason in the mother of battles.

Velayati's Remarks on Repair of Holy Sites Noted

JN2708181691 Baghdad INA in English 1744 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Baghdad, Aug. 27, INA—An Iraqi official spokesman today criticized the statement made to the Iranian TV by Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati on the reconstruction of Holy shrines in Iraq.

The Iranian TV quoted Mr. Velayati as expressing concern over what he had termed as the pressures shouldered by the Moslem Iraqi people and infringing the sanctity of Holy shrines and expressing Iran readiness to reconstruct Holy shrines in Iraq.

In a statement to INA, a Foreign Ministry source commented on Velayati statements and said that Iraq would not allow those trying to realize political targets behind showing sympathy and keenness over the tombs of the leaders of Arabs and Moslem by donating to their ancestors and leaders. The source stressed that the Iraqi people were capable of rendering the required care and maintenance to them.

Senior Amal Source—Navigator Arad in Tehran

TA2808104291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Excerpt] Fresh reports from Beirut on the fate of Israeli navigator Ron Arad: Beirut newspapers say he is now being held by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in Tehran. In another development in Beirut, deposed Lebanese President Michel 'Awn has been granted amnesty and is expected to fly to Europe later today. Ya'aqov Rosenberg reports:

The latest reports published today in Beirut's newspapers quote a senior source in the Shiite organization Amal. The source says Israeli navigator Ron Arad, captured in 1986 during a bombing mission in Lebanon, is now being held by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard in Tehran. The Amal source says his organization captured Arad after he bailed out of a Phantom jet. He was then handed over to the Revolutionary Guard in exchange for $500,000. Arad was eventually taken to Tehran where he has been held for the last few months. Amal says it is also holding the remains of two missing Israeli servicemen. Amal leader and Lebanese Minister of State Nabih Birri says Israel must release 28 Shiite women before Amal allows the Red Cross to examine the bodies. [passage omitted]

Birri Remark on MIA's Called 'Unfounded Claim'

TA2708163191 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1600 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Shiite leader Nabih Birri claims that Amal holds the bodies of two Israeli MIA's in Lebanon. After his meeting with UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar today, Iran's UN Ambassador Kamal Kharrazi said that Iran has no information whatsoever about the Israeli MIA's.

Reacting to this report, Dani Nave, the defense minister's media adviser, said that as long as the bodies have not been meticulously examined and their identity has not been ascertained, Nabih Birri's statement should be seen as an unfounded claim.

Shamir—Representation Depends on Palestinians

TA2808103991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by political correspondent Arye Golan in Sofia "this morning"—recorded]

[Text] [Golan] Mr. Prime Minister, have you started preparations for Secretary of State Baker's visit to Israel, possibly as soon as next week?

[Shamir] I have received no notice of an impending visit. I am sure that when he wants to come, we will know it in advance.

[Golan] Do you still believe the conference will take place in October, as per plans made before the events in the Soviet Union?

[Shamir] Judging by the scope of investment in this process, this initiative, and by the United States' expressions of intent, we can make a logical deduction that it will indeed take place.

[Golan] Is there any solution to the problem of Palestinian representation?

[Shamir] Right now I see no solution, no positive approach on their part. Judging by what we have heard, their stance has become even tougher. Still, the solution depends on them; there are no difficulties as far as we are concerned.

[Golan] Can the conference be held without the Palestinians?

[Shamir] As far as we are concerned—yes.

[Golan] Thank you very much, Mr. Prime Minister.

U.S. Concessions to Palestinians Foreseen

TA2808094791 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 28 Aug 91 p 1

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[Text] The PLO and the Palestinians have assumed a more radical position on the peace process because of their belief that Israel's status is now stronger than ever. This assessment was voiced by political elements in Jerusalem in the wake of the Palestinians' recent consultations with the Americans and Arab countries and among themselves.

In the political elements' opinion, the events in the USSR have produced an even more radical stand by the Palestinians, who are now focusing their opposition to the U.S. process on the issue of the East Jerusalem representation to peace talks. In the past, the Palestinians appeared willing to consider various relevant compromises, such as having East Jerusalem represented by a Jordanian member of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Recently, however, they have reverted to their demand that the city be represented by a Palestinian actually living in East Jerusalem.

The Palestinian emphasis on the issue of East Jerusalem stems from their awareness that the Arab countries are in no position to criticize their stand on this matter and that this is the Israeli Government's toughest dilemma.

The political figures stated that this assessment is corroborated by the lack of progress in the recent talks by Yasir 'Arafat in Amman and PLO Executive Committee member Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] in Cairo.

The Palestinians believe that Israel's standing in the international arena is currently stronger than it has been for many years and that they should therefore wait either

for the international situation to change or for the United States to recognize the need to pressure Israel again to secure Palestinian representation at the peace conference.

The political elements said that during his expected visit to the region, Secretary of State James Baker's main task will not be to finalize a document giving assurances with Israel, but rather to crack the Palestinian objection to concessions. The elements believe, at the same time, that significant American concessions to the Palestinians may change their position on representation.

"The Palestinians' logic works in the opposite direction of Baker's," an official said in Jerusalem last night.

Paper Questions Need for Another Visit by Baker

TA2708101291 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 27 Aug 91 p B1

[Editorial: "Baker's Seventh Visit"]

[Text] Yasir 'Arafat left Amman yesterday. 'Arafat and the Jordanian monarch did not succeed in reaching agreement on a coordinated approach to the regional peace conference. King Husayn, whose hands were scorched in the Gulf crisis, cannot afford to say "no" to the United States—and accepting the PLO leader's conditions for attending the conference would have been tantamount to that. Yasir 'Arafat is demanding a prior commitment from the United States for an Israeli withdrawal according to the Arab interpretation of UN Resolution 242, including Jerusalem, and a recognition of the Palestinian right to self-determination. Husayn understands that Israel's acceptance of these terms would constitute a virtual surrender that any government, not just one headed by Yitzhaq Shamir, would categorically reject.

At the cabinet session two days ago, three ministers, who clearly represent the Israeli right wing, expressed a position that was intrinsically similar to the position that was presented by Yasir 'Arafat and rejected by King Husayn. These ministers—Sharon, Ne'eman, and Ze'evi—used the past week's developments in the Soviet Union as a pretext for their proposal to suspend temporarily, from 4 August, the cabinet's decision to attend the peace conference. However, the arguments presented by the three ministers in support of their proposal did not sound any more convincing than 'Arafat's: If the conference is indeed convened—even if, as the London paper THE INDEPENDENT reported, it takes place slightly later than planned due to the turmoil in the Soviet Government—Israel and Jordan, each for its own reasons, will be present at the opening session.

If this assessment is valid, what point is there for a seventh visit by Secretary of State Baker to the Middle East? If all the invited parties show up, it is very doubtful that 'Arafat could succeed in realizing his demands and reject the invitation, claiming that the United States had turned down his conditions. Even if the PLO leader manages to convince the delegates of the Palestine National Council, due to convene next month, that the PLO would be better off not attending the peace conference, it might be held without the organization present—and then what would its intransigence have achieved? It is doubtful that even Israel could risk a Massada-like rejection of the invitation, despite the alleged U.S. reluctance to sign a memorandum of understanding cementing its agreement with all the Israeli positions.

The talk of James Baker's expected arrival is enough to cast doubt on the convening of the peace conference as an established fact. Anyone can imagine the ruckus that Ari'el Sharon and his soul mates will cause when the differences between the American and Israeli positions on the issues in contention are made public. The justification for Baker's seventh trip may be in the fact that the secretary of state's memorandum of understanding, which fulfills the Israeli demands, does not limit itself to the procedural aspects of the conference but also pertains to the fundamental resolution of the conflict and the scope and nature of the peace agreement.

It is logical to assume that the United States is not interested in seeing the Israeli delegation noisily walk out of the conference the first time any question regarding the fundamental aspects of the peace process is raised. It is therefore better to eliminate any pretexts that could be used as pertinent justification for a hasty exit.

There is good cause to believe that the U.S. concern, if it has indeed been awakened, is justified. There is room, however, to doubt the logic of launching practical discussions at this late hour. The Americans would do better by letting the dynamics of negotiations run their course, especially since the actual launching of the negotiations seems inevitable both to Israel and the Arab countries. These dynamics may turn into a disappointment in light of the barriers separating Israel and its neighbors; but does American intervention at this early stage, even before the sides have held any contacts, guarantee success?

Commentary Sees Conference in National Interest

TA2708104091 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 27 Aug 91 p B1

[Commentary by Yo'el Marcus: "A Return to the Agenda"]

[Text] In the morning he went fishing, in the afternoon he went swimming. In between the two events, President Bush addressed an impromptu news conference at his vacation home in Maine. "Now that the turmoil is over," he said, "I do not see any reason why the USSR should not join us in advancing the peace conference." To underline his remarks, the President added that Baker spoke on the telephone with Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh, and "I have no doubt that the USSR is as committed to the peace process as before."

Only hours passed before Bessmertnykh had left the scene. He was fired. And two days later it was no longer clear whether there was still something called the USSR. Entire states, one after the other, pulled themselves away from the mother country and declared their independence, leaving Gorbachev without a country to rule, without a party to lead, and without an army to command. Who knows? Perhaps there will no Gorbachev soon either. These breakneck developments remind us somewhat of a well-known Israeli comedy show. Was there once a superpower?

There is no wonder that Labor Party Knesset Member Ya'aqov Tzur winced when he protested: "God is a Likudnik and Shamir is his messenger on earth." With the disbanding of the USSR—the putsch, Yeltsin's counterputsch, and the putsches still to come—the story there has only just started. A superpower has stopped being a power. And it can be asked that if Russia is now only Yeltsin's state of Russia, what priority does it have above any other European state to be an equal with the United States as the host of the peace conference? It would therefore not be an exaggeration to assume that the USSR as a power with influence to advance peace is no longer a player. It will be so busy dealing with its own problems that it is doubtful whether even the person who is supposed to host the conference with Bush will be in that job between the time it is announced and the time it opens.

Influenced by these developments, several ministers demanded in this week's cabinet meeting to freeze the conference for six months. Very weird demands. One might think that the Israeli Government is the one that wanted Soviet involvement in the conference and the peace process. The contrary is true; the Soviet role in the process is in fact a source of concern for the government. The USSR's departure from the scene should therefore have been a source of joy and not an excuse for postponements. What is happening there should not change anything in our national agenda.

The government must remain loyal to the idea of the conference and the peace process for two reasons:

A. Despite what has happened, the U.S. Administration has not lost any of its eagerness and determination to bring about a settlement in the region. During the very midst of the revolution and counterrevolution in the USSR, the prime minister received a very blunt message from James Baker. He makes clear to Shamir in an unequivocal way that the process the United States has begun cannot be stopped despite the events in the USSR. People who read the missive received the impression that its style was tough and probably aimed at removing any pretext not to attend the conference. Baker himself is still facing many difficulties before he can put together a Palestinian delegation, and Syria has made it clear to him through covert channels that without the Palestinians it too will not attend the conference. He has not even begun to talk about this with Jordan. What was made clear to us that with or without Russia the conference will take place. The Americans now feel that they are really the masters of the world, and therefore we should not provoke them.

B. The second, if not the main, reason Israel must jump into the cold waters of the process with both feet is that we need it. Only last weekend there were five attacks with live ammunition on our soldiers, and three civilians were also hit. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is presenting a multiyear procurement plan of billions of shekels when it is becoming clear that living by the sword is not only tiresome and debilitating but also very expensive. That is not something a country which might find itself, perhaps very soon, absorbing yet another wave of Soviet Jews in an emergency operation, can do.

Putsch-shmutsch—we are left with the same pressing problems. They are ours and ours alone, and it is in Israel's national interest to deal with them, with or without Gorbachev.

Sharon Outlines Housing Plan for Territories

TA2708132891 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 27 Aug 91 p 12

[By Alisa Odenheimer and Jon Immanuel]

[Text] Thousands of homes will be built in the administered territories over the next few years, according to a plan outlined by Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon during a Knesset debate yesterday.

This was the most detailed account Sharon has given of his long- term building plans.

The plan includes:

—Greater Jerusalem: Sharon outlines a plan to expand Jerusalem in a ring of new housing, that would surround the city from the south, east, and north.

Specifically, Sharon said that he would build from the Tzur Hadasa and Mevo Betar area in the southwest, creating a "solid belt of settlement" through the city of Betar. From there, new construction would continue through to Gush 'Ezyon. He added that "thousands of units" will be built on the northerly edge of Efrat, up to the ridge overlooking Solomon's pools.

The ring of housing will continue, according to Sharon, through Teqo'a and Ma'ale Adumim up through Mikhmash, Adam, Abir-Ya'aqov and through Givat Ze'ev—which Sharon said would be expanded considerably—and then to Har Adar.

—Ma'ale Adumim and Jericho: Sharon pledged to expand Ma'ale Adumim considerably, so that Ma'ale Adumim would extend to the eastern neighborhoods of Jerusalem, and eastward "to the ridges," apparently a reference to the ridges overlooking the Jordan Valley.

"You may ask, wait a minute, what about the other side of the Jericho ridges, through to the Jordan River?" Sharon said.

"So that you should have no reason to worry, I am telling you that our program includes a plan to build around Jericho, in order to strengthen the strongholds and to strengthen the settlements in that area."

—The south and the Negev: Sharon stated that he plans to build a large new settlement on the Green Line, east of Nehusha.

—The center: Sharon stated that he would build 4,000 units in Avney Hefetz, southeast of Tulkarm, and that the plans for this have already been drawn up and submitted for approval. He pledged to build "thousands" of new housing units in Ari'el.

Al-Haq, the Ramallah-based human rights group, yesterday issued a report maintaining that there has been an "accelerated pace of settlement construction" and since January 1990 the government has expropriated 418,642 dunams of the West Bank and Gaza Strip compared with fewer than 90,000 dunams in the previous two years.

The report maintained that 16,300 new immigrants have settled in parts of Jerusalem beyond the Green Line and that the scope of immigration, by putting a strain on Israel's housing resources, is encouraging other Israelis to move to the territories. It put total Jewish settlement at 104,000 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and 127,700 in parts of Jerusalem beyond the Green Line.

Transit Restrictions at Jordan Bridges Rescinded

TA2708174191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] The Civil Administration of Judaea and Samaria has revoked restrictions it had imposed at the outset of the intifadah on residents leaving for Jordan. As of 1 September, residents of the territories wishing to travel to Jordan will be able to buy tickets at any post office branch in their neighborhood and to leave across the bridges.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the new measures introduced by the Civil Administration on the bridges include a customs counter where passengers with nothing to declare can cross freely. Only selected residents returning from Jordan will undergo a body search. Formerly, every returning resident was searched.

Defense Ministry Official Warns Against Cuts

TA2708112691 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 27 Aug 91 p B1

[Report by 'Imanu'el Rosen]

[Excerpt] "A budget cut or not instituting a supplementary budget will increase the erosion in the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] preemptive capability and will lead to a high risk of war," Defense Ministry Director General David 'Ivri told MA'ARIV in the wake of the Treasury's demand to cut the defense budget.

'Ivri said a cut would in the short run result in "less procurement and development of weapons systems and more dismissals from the military industries, while in the medium and long runs the IDF will have fewer answers for the anticipated threats." He said that "the questions asked by the public during the Gulf war will not receive sufficient responses."

Referring to the Treasury's proposals to postpone part of the payments, 'Ivri said: "There will be two very serious repercussions: One, a postponement in applying the lessons of the Gulf war. Two, halting development and procurement plans already in the works, which means further dismissals in the military industries."

'Ivri said that the IDF is currently undertaking a serious cutback program aimed at freeing resources for procuring weapons systems. An additional cutback "is unreasonable and will increase the risks already being taken."

In reply to the Treasury's claim that the defense establishment is exaggerating in its dire warnings, 'Ivri said: "After the Gulf war we have to prepare for the next war. The chances of preventing a war increase the more prepared we are." [passage omitted]

Prime Minister Shamir Visits Bulgaria

WA2808131391

For Bulgarian and Israeli reportage on the visit by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir to Bulgaria, including reports on his talks with Bulgarian Prime Minister Dimitur Popov, please see the Bulgarian section of the Tuesday, 27 August East Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

President al-Hirawi Departs for Damascus

NC2808073591 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0700 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi and his wife left for Damascus on a special plane a short time ago where the president will hold talks with top Syrian officials.

Al-Hirawi Signs Decree Pardoning 'Awn

NC2808054291 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] General Michel 'Awn is expected to leave the French Embassy for Paris within 48 hours following President Ilyas al-Hirawi's signing of the special pardon decree. The cabinet approved the draft decree during its meeting last night.

The 48-hour period set for the departure of General Michel 'Awn and his aides Edgar Ma'luf and 'Isam Abu-Jamrah began the moment the decree was signed by President al-Hirawi, Prime Minister Karami, and Justice Minister Khatchig Babikian.

The arrangements for the departure will be discussed with a French delegation which is due to arrive in Beirut aboard a special plane at 0730 today. The delegation will meet with Prime Minister 'Umar Karami and Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz at 0900.

French Delegation Begins Talks on 'Awn Departure

NC2808073491 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0700 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Talks on the departure of General Michel 'Awn and his aides Edgar Ma'luf and 'Isam Abu-Jamrah from the French Embassy for Paris have begun. A French delegation arrived this morning and is currently meeting with Prime Minister 'Umar Karami, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, and Minister Shawqi Fakhuri.

The French delegation is made up of Patrick Leclerq, director of the Middle East department in the Foreign Ministry; General (Cannon), chief of the French president's staff; and (Bernard Kasajian), director of the foreign minister's office [titles as heard]. The delegation arrived on a special French plane this morning. Journalists were prevented from approaching the plane.

Cabinet Approves Pardons for 'Awn, Aides

NC2708174991 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1738 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] The cabinet ended its session a short while ago. During the meeting, the cabinet ratified a decree granting a special pardon to General Michel 'Awn, Brigadier General Edgar Ma'luf, and Colonel 'Isam Abu-Jamrah.

Amnesty Law Issued; Goes Into Effect 29 Aug

NC2708124991 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] The Amnesty Law was issued today as Law No. 94. The law grants a general pardon for the crimes committed prior to 28 March 1991, under certain conditions.

Under the last article of the bill, the law goes into effect on the day it is published. The Prime Minister's Office has sent the law to the official gazette to be published in edition No. 35, which will be issued Thursday [29 August].

Government Threatened Over Libya Visit

NC2808144891 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1415 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Two hitherto unknown clandestine organizations today threatened the government delegation which has gone to Libya. One calls itself the Cell of Shaykh Muhammad Ya'qub of Imam Musa al-Sadr's Brigades [Khaliyat al-Shaykh Muhammad Ya'qub fi Alwiyat al-Imam Musa al-Sadr], while the other goes by the name of the 31 Black August Organization [Munazzamat al-Hadi wa al-Thalathin min Ab al-Aswad]. The two organizations warned of the consequences of the visit to Libya. One of them threatened it would force the staff of the Libyan Embassy to leave the country unless Imam al-Sadr's fate was clarified.

Afghanistan

7 Pakistan-Based Groups Boycott Tehran Talks

BK2708144991 Hong Kong AFP in English 1416 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Islamabad, Aug 27 (AFP)—A Pakistan delegation together with Sunni Afghan guerrilla representatives left here Tuesday for Tehran to take part in Iranian-organised negotiations on the future of Afghanistan.

The rebel delegation was headed by Sebghatullah Mujadeddi, said the Sunnite resistance mouthpiece MIDIA.

But seven other Pakistan-based guerrilla groups are boycotting the talks, part of Iranian and Pakistani efforts to harmonise guerrilla positions to achieve a settlement of the Afghan conflict under United Nations auspices.

Among the no-shows were the pro-Saudi Etehad-e Eslami of Rasul Sayyaf and the two Hezb-e Eslami factions of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Yunis Khalis, rebel sources said.

The Pakistani delegation was led by Akram Zaki, Foreign Ministry secretary-general, and included officials from Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, which oversees distribution of U.S. supplied arms to the guerrillas.

The boycott by Sunnite rebel leaders, who have openly accused Iran of wanting to give too great a representation at the talks to Shiite groups, has fostered pessimism here, various sources confirmed.

The Tehran meeting comes only a month after a conference in Islamabad which brought together both Shiite and Sunni rebel groups based in Peshawar and Tehran.

A joint statement issued after those talks, presided by Zaki and Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, said that the UN plan on Afghanistan could serve as a basis for a negotiated settlement to the conflict.

But it added that any solution had to include the replacement of the pro-Soviet government in Kabul of President Najibollah.

Saudi Intelligence Chief Meets Afghan Rebels

BK2708164991 Hong Kong AFP in English 1443 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Islamabad, Aug 27 (AFP)—Saudi Arabian intelligence chief Prince Turki al-Faysal met Afghan resistance leaders here on the eve of Tehran conference of Pakistan, Iran and the mojahedin factions, an official report said Tuesday.

At the meeting with mojahedin leaders Monday, Prince Turki assured them that Saudi Arabia will continue to support the Afghan resistance and refugees, the official ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN (APP) reported.

Pakistani Foreign Ministry Secretary-General Akram Zaki flew to the Iranian capital earlier in the day accompanied by officials and the resistance representatives.

APP said Zaki had with him aboard a special Pakistan Air Force plane a 10-member official delegation and 25 resistance leaders representing different factions.

"Whenever the prince comes here it is for crucial matters," said a Western diplomat, referring to the intra-rebel fighting in eastern Konarha Province of Afghanistan and the Soviet events.

The diplomat recalled the "mutual mistrust" between Tehran and Riyadh in the past on the Afghan issue and the differences between Iran-based Shiite mojahedin and rebel factions backed by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Some fundamentalist Sunni mojahedin groups have been critical of Iran's role and accused the Shiite mojahedin of demanding unmeritedly large representation in any common body.

Three fundamentalist rebel groups—the Hezb-e Eslami of Golbuddin Hekmatyar, Hezb-i Eslami of Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf and Ittehad-e Eslami of Yunus Khalis—have boycotted the Tehran meeting.

The Saudi prince, lauding the mojahedin jihad or holy war, asked the resistance to avoid "infighting," APP said.

Hekmatyar's party said Tuesday it had driven out pro-Saudi Salfis from the provincial capital of Asadabad in Konarha while Salfi representatives in the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar said fighting was continuing with heavy losses on both sides.

Zaki was quoted as telling reporters before his departure that the Tehran conference would make "important headway" towards a political settlement in Afghanistan.

The first session of the conference in Islamabad late last month endorsed the May 21 U.N. proposals on Afghanistan as a possible basis for a settlement provided Soviet-backed President Najibollah was removed from power in Kabul.

The blueprint proposed an intra-Afghan dialogue to set up a transitional administration in Kabul paving the way for elections and formation of a broadbased government.

Zaki said the atmosphere was "conducive" for arriving at a "positive" conclusion as the recent developments in the Soviet Union were favorable for a political settlement of the 13-year-old Afghan problem.

In apparent reference to the prince, Zaki said a high-level envoy of King Fahd met Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif here Monday and assured him of the Saudi Government's "full support" for a political settlement.

The United States and the Soviet Government also back the peace efforts, Zaki said, expressing optimism about the success of the Tehran conference.

He said the boycott by certain resistance groups would not impair the conference, adding "the talks should not be affected by the views of minority."

Zaki said Pakistan and Iran were trying to bring all the resistance groups to a unanimos decision regarding the formation of an interim Afghan Government, with the U.N. proposals being the basis of negotiation.

Hekmatyar Faction Captures Pro-Saudi Stronghold

BK2708140191 Hong Kong AFP in English 1351 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, Aug 27 (AFP)—The Afghan rebel faction Hezb-e-Eslami has wrested control of the capital city of Eastern Konarha Province, driving out rival Salfi Group, a Hezb spokesman said here Tuesday.

Asadabad, held for years by the pro-Saudi Arab Salfis, was taken over Monday after the people defending the capital city "agreed not to resist in return for safe passage" to the neighbouring Pakistani tribal are a of Bajaur, he said.

The spokesman said the fighters of the Salfi group in Asadabad either surrendered or fled.

The Salfi group conceding "heavy losses" in Asadabad, claimed that the internecine fight was gop on and more than 100 people have been killed in the past two weeks.

Some commanders, "bought" by rival Hezb, have defected while mojahedin loyal to Salfi Leader Mawlawi Jamilur Rehman were defending from the surrounding mountains, the group's spokesman said.

The Hezb sources declined to give casualty figures.

The Salfis had captured Kunar soon after the Soviet troop invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, setting up (word indistinct) administration in the province.

Bangladesh

Border Coordination Conference With India Begins

BK2708161691 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] A two-day border coordination conference between Bangladesh and India began at Sylhet today. The main issues figured in the conference were anti-smuggling measures, trans-border crimes, law and order in the border area, and maintenance of border pillars. Deputy Director General of Bangladesh Rifles Brigadier Abdullah Al- Hussain led the Bangladesh delegation at the talks. The India side was headed by the inspector general of Border Security Forces of Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, and Nagaland Frontier, Mr. G.K. Rajagopalan.

State Land Minister Resigns To Run in Election

BK2708161591 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] State Minister for Land Mr. Zamiruddin Sirkar today voluntarily submitted his resignation to the acting president, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed. The acting president accepted his resignation. In his letter of resignation Mr. Sirkar has stated he is resigning as state minister to make his election free from any controversy. Mr. Zamiruddin Sirkar will contest by-election to the Jatiya Sangsad [parliament] from a Dhaka constituency.

India

Satellite Slated for Launch From USSR 29 Aug

BK2708161291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] The final countdown has begun for the launch of the second indigenously built Indian remote sensing satellite—IRS-1B. It will be launched aboard a Soviet Vostok rocket from the Baykonur Cosmodrome in the Soviet Union shortly after midday on Thursday [29 August]. The Indian Space Research Organization announced in Bangalore this afternoon that the satellite has been mated with the launch vehicle and all final tests have been successfully carried out. The satellite will replace the first remote sensing spacecraft—IRS-1A—which has completed its scheduled three years of operational life.

Attempt To Sneak Militants Into Kashmir Foiled

BK2708155791 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] The Indian troops have foiled yet another Pakistani attempt to sneak a large number of militants into Jammu and Kashmir. At least six militants were killed in (Kiruni) village in Punch sector near the line of actual control last night when they tried to infiltrate under the cover of heavy artillery fire by Pakistani troops. An official spokesman said in New Delhi today that an army captain and a jawan [soldier] were killed in the unprovoked firing. The firing is still going on.

The spokesman said the Pakistan forces had earlier also provided similar fire cover to militants for sneaking into India.

More 'Unprovoked Firing' by Pakistani Troops

BK2808085891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, unprovoked firing by Pakistani troops in Punch sector has been continuing

since Monday night. Indian troops returned the fire and foiled another Pakistani attempt to help sneak trained militants in the region. Casualties on both the sides could not be ascertained due to adverse weather conditions in the area.

Minister Urges Stronger Ties With Bangladesh

BK2808035691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] The external affairs minister, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki, has called for strengthening relations between India and Bangladesh. Speaking at a dinner hosted in honor of the visiting Bangladeshi foreign minister, Mr. Rahman, in New Delhi, he said both countries should address bilateral issues on the basis of mutual trust and confidence. He expressed the hope that the visit of the Bangladeshi foreign minister will lead to greater understanding and open new avenues for cooperation.

Iran

Envoy to UN Discusses Hostage Release Efforts

NC2708170391 Paris AFP in English 1647 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Excerpts] Beirut, Aug 27 (AFP)—The head of the Lebanese Shiite movement Amal on Tuesday said his group was holding the bodies of two Israeli servicemen and would allow the Red Cross to view the remains if Israel released 28 Lebanese women prisoners.

In Geneva Iran's U.N. representative Kamal Kharrazi disclosed that Iran had been urging pro-Iranian Lebanese groups holding 10 Western hostages to release their captives but had made no progress.

Kharrazi, following a meeting with U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, blamed Israel for what he said was a stalemate in United Nations efforts to resolve the Middle East hostage issue. [passage omitted]

Kharrazi, speaking in Geneva, stressed that Iran "has no information on the Israeli soldiers." "That information is in Lebanon," he insisted, and was a matter for the Lebanese and the Israelis to resolve.

"The only thing we can do is to encourage the Lebanese to be more flexible and to free the hostages. But it is very natural that they have their own demands and they want to see their own hostages released." He acknowledged there had been no progress in such efforts over the past 10 days, an initiative he described as a "delicate operation."

Kharrazi also noted the importance Tehran attached to acquiring information on four Iranians who were kidnapped by Christian militamen north of Beirut in 1982.

"We have done our best to contribute to the liberation of all the hostages, including the four Iranians," Kharrazi said after meeting Perez de Cuellar.

"Until now the process has been blocked by Israel, which has not responded," he added, referring to the release earlier this month of Briton John McCarthy and American Edward Tracy, two of the Westerners held in Lebanon. [passage omitted]

UN Chief's Coming Visit Not Hostage-Related

LD2808081291 Tehran IRNA in English 0632 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] United Nations, New York, Aug. 28, IRNA—U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar will pay an official visit to Iran on September 10, the U.N. chief office said in an announcement here Tuesday.

The visit is taking place at the invitation of Iran's President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the announcement added.

The purpose of [Perez] de Cuellar's visit is to follow up implementation of paragraphs of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 598, on ending Iraq-Iran war, which have not yet been executed, the paragraph 6 in particular. This paragraph calls on the U.N. chief to set up a committee to probe and name the aggressor party in ther 1980-88 Iraq-Iran war, de Cuellar's spokesman said. He also rejected any connection between the visit and the issue of Western hostages still held in Lebanon. No information was released on the length of de Cuellar's visit or his meetings in Tehran. Meanwhile, Iran's Permanent Envoy to the U.N. Kamal Kharrazi met with de Cuellar in Geneva Tuesday and discussed the issue of Western and Muslim hostages held in Lebanon. Kharrazi said after the meeting that any plan for release of the Western hostages must not overlook fate of four Iranians kidnapped by Phalangists. As for the fate of the Israeli war prisoners held in Lebanon, Kharrazi said according to information, a number of them have been killed. Tel Aviv has reportedly informed de Cuellar that Israel will not free any Muslim, Lebanese or Palestinian prisoner before finding out about the fate of the Israeli prisoners.

Lebanese resistance groups freed two Western hostages early this month expecting that the Zionist regime will reciprocate the move by releasing a number of Muslim prisoners. Six of the seven missing Israeli soldiers are said to have been killed and forces of Lebanon's Amal Movement are said to have bodies of two of the missing Israeli soldiers.

Velayati on Afghanistan in Wake of USSR Events

LD2808113291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Excerpts] The Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to make every effort toward a definite solution to the Afghanistan issue, with the assistance of Pakistan and the Muslim Afghan mojahedin, Foreign Minister Velayati stressed at a joint meeting of Iran, Pakistan, and Afghan mojahedin in Tehran. He said: While speedily

solving the Afghanistan issue and other problems of the Muslims, the Islamic world should take part in shaping the new world order in line with their divine ideals and take advantage of the prevailing global conditions, to the advantage of the Muslim peoples.

At the meeting, our foreign minister described the extensive effects of the decisions made at the Islamabad meeting and the welcome received from friendly and Muslim countries, as well as the touchiness shown by other parties. He said that the Islamabad decisions constitute a correct posture toward adopting a common stance on a fair and just solution to the Afghanistan issue.

Referring to the deep upheavals in the region and the world resulting from the Islamic movement of Afghanistan, he said: History and posterity will clarify the effects of the Islamic developments and movements in the region, such as the victory of the Islamic revolution, the struggles of the Muslim people of Afghanistan, the movement of the Afghan mojahedin, and the intifadah in the occupied lands of Palestine, on the deep regional and global upheavals and the awakening of other liberal nations of the world.

On the recent developments in the Soviet Union and their impact in the region, he expressed the hope that the developments will ultimately be effective in speeding up a solution to the Afghan issue.

Finally, said he hopes that the outcome of the meeting will be fruitful and constructive and pave the way for the establishment of an independent, Islamic, nonaligned government reliant on the wishes of the Muslim people of Afghanistan.

After Mr. Velayati's address, Mr. Akram Zaki, the Pakistani deputy foreign minister, and Mr. Mojaddadi, head of the provisional government of the Afghan mojahedin, made speeches. [passage omitted]

Thanking the friendly brother countries of Iran and Pakistan Mr. Mojaddadi spoke of the the effects of developments and upheavals in one country and region on others. He said: Without a link to others, societies could not survive. He stressed that he favors establishing and strengthening ties with neighbors and Islamic countries. [passage omitted]

Talks With Iraq End; al-Faysal Comments

JN2708183991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1810 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Tehran, 27 Aug (INA)—Three days of official talks between Iraqi and Iranian delegations ended here today.

Sa'd 'Abd-al-Majid al-Faysal, Foreign Ministry under secretary and head of the Iraqi delegation, told an INA reporter in Tehran that the talks focused on the return of Iraqi POW's and planes.

He said the two sides exchanged views on a number of issues of concern to the region, especially the security of the Arabian Gulf. We stressed, he added, that there will be no stability in the Gulf if Iraq, which is one of the main countries overlooking the Gulf, is excluded.

Mr. al-Faysal pointed out that the talks also dealt with ways to normalize relations between the two countries and prospects for their promotion, with a view toward serving the interests of the two neighboring peoples. The two sides also discussed the establishment of neighborly relations characterized by trust, understanding, and noninterference in the internal affairs of the other.

Mr. al-Faysal said the two sides agreed to continue holding such meetings to reach the best formulas and ways to resolve all pending issues.

President' 24 Aug News Conference Reported

LD2508161591 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1710 GMT 24 Aug 91

[News conference given by President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani "on the occasion of the forthcoming government week," in Tehran on 24 August—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Rafsanjani] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Praise be to God. Peace be upon the messenger of God and his scion. I welcome all reporters from the country's press. I thought that at the start of the government week, I should present the press with a set of compiled information, by virtue of which we may familiarize our people with issues concerning the country's affairs; even though the issues have been reported on various occasions throughout the year, nevertheless, a compiled and comprehensive presentation of them could be useful to you and the people. The ministers and all those concerned are to elaborate on the issues related to their departments, in the course of these days [government week]. My remarks will be very general and in an itemized form. After stating the generalities, I will give the gentlemen time for any questions which may come to mind with regard to the issues I am about to mention. [passage omitted]

As for our achievements—in the political, cultural, administrative and economic sectors—I will provide you with a summary comprising 28 to 30 issues, according to the order in which I have itemized them. First, I will speak about the political and cultural ones, then the administrative, followed by the economic ones.

The first achievement was that of resolving the issue of the [Iran-Iraq] war. I remember our concern over the situation at the borders during the neither-war-nor-peace condition. God aided us, and as you were aware, it was resolved through a series of political activities and the suitable meetings which took place. The POWs were repatriated, the enemy left our territory, and the world acknowledged our victory—the best kind of victory. Even if we had occupied Iraq at that time during the war, we would not have enjoyed such achievements as we

have now, since that would have brought about its own peculiar problems. [passage omitted]

The second achievement was the issue of hajj, which had become a complex for our country and our people. They were deprived of the hajj, an issue which, praise be to God, was resolved and the people went to perform the hajj.

The third achievement was that of improving our presence on the world political scene. We managed to penetrate the fence which was erected around us. We are not saying that the fence was totally demolished. We penetrated it, considerably improving our political relations with the countries of our choice, even though that fence still exists, and it is a serious fence. Do not be deluded by the remarks they make—by all that which they write or say. You can see that the Americans are still viciously holding our assets there, while these assets are of great value to us. The French, as you have seen, have still not paid their debt despite the steps that have been taking. A large number of important contracts which we have signed with western countries—with Britain, France, and Germany, with whom we more or less have relations, and our friends—have not been implemented. The Japanese, with whom we had no problems, declined to complete the petrochemical project, because they had been influenced by others [as heard]—even though 80 to 85 percent of it had been completed.

All this indicates the presence of a kind of invisible fence around us, and in general they still continue to deny us strategic things: technologies and industrial requirements. Nevertheless, it is not as severe as it was in the past. As for our presence on the international scene—although we were practically boycotted—as you see, now we are elected as presidents, in many areas. Where there is little American influence, the countries are ready to give weight to the Islamic republic as an independent country with rational statements and endowed with a prophetic mission.

As for UN resolution [598], the enemy was trying to implement it in an unjust way. We have taken some steps and we placed the resolution on the correct course for implementation. [passage omitted]

At the same time, I think that all the official efforts are not worth talking about compared to our people's struggles. [passage omitted]

I will tell you a politicio-socio-economic point as well. All this your country has done without relying on outsiders. Look at the history of wars. See how any country which has sought to reconstruct itself after war has taken help from here and there. Not only did we not seek help, but we were not given the resources we had abroad. The UN officials who came here recently were horrified at seeing the war damages. They reported on it. They said that it will take a long time to put right. [passage omitted]

We are doing all those tasks on our own, with our own forces, hands, funds and by economizing and bearing hardships. We understand what those things are. The foreigners spread the propaganda that Iran needs the West, but our situation is clear. We are not willing to retreat one step from our ideal. They have realized this. The Soviet Union's history is before our eyes and we are witnessing how they have humiliated such a great country in the name of helping her. They did not help her. But we are not willing to fall into that trap. We have proven that we can. I tell you today that the danger point after the war, from the economic point of view...[changes thought] and they forecast that either by the passing away of the imam or by the problems of the war, the economic problems of the war, will be undone. Thank God we have put both those behind us. The imam's absence is extremely hard for us, but our leadership is taking the country forward with the same policies of the imam and the same spirit. The authorities of the Islamic country have done all that I have told you.

Now the rest of the time is at your disposal, and I am ready to answer any questions you have on any subject. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Thank you and congratulations on the occasion of government week. Mr. Hashemi, one of the three branches that the eminent leader addressed during his recent speech were the government officials. Please tell us about the programs during government week to combat ostentation, deprivation, red tape, and the struggle against the organized cultural invasion by the West including the discovery of its pawns in various places.

[Rafsanjani] The words of the eminent leader were exactly in line with the policies of the government. From the first day, we told our ministers and managers to take care not to fall into the trap of ostentation and luxurious waste. There were one or two instances [changes thought], his warning is a good source of support for our policy. I have already talked about the fight against deprivation and how it has been in our policies and programs from the first day. Cultural issues are pillars of the revolution and recently, in the Supreme Council of the cultural revolution, we designated and approved our policies. Of course, our main policy is to attract the people to the culture with ideology; however, side by side with education and reasoning we may need pain killers and surgery.

[Correspondent] Please tell us the contents of Mr. Gorbachev's message to you. Also, what is the official policy of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran with regard to the recent problems in the Soviet Union?

[Rafsanjani] His message was a friendly one. It stressed that in any case the rule of law will be implemented in their country and that they oppose chaos. He said that they will meet their commitments that we formulated when I was there; they are still in place and will be implemented. He expressed his hope that our relations will expand. My reply to him addressed these issues.

Our policy: In any case, we oppose coup d'etat methods in any country. The people's opinion must be guided on the correct path, it is the vote of the people that decides the fate of any country. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] I have a question about the French president's trip to Iran. Will the trip take place at the agreed time or not?

[Rafsanjani] The situation remains unchanged. They extended an invitation to me and I extended an invitation to them. They agreed to come in the future, within a certain time. That was agreed. There seems to be nothing new to indicate that the trip will not take place. If a problem does not arise, it will go ahead as agreed. Like all other trips.

[Correspondent] Mr. President, at a recent meeting you said that Iran's conditions during the imposed war were being met. Will the repatriation of the remaining POWs and the arrival of war reparations from Iraq take place soon?

[Rafsanjani] About the remaining POWs, Iraq has still not admitted the existence of the POWs, whose names we have, and who were in Iraq at some point and have not returned. They have recently given us the names of a small number, 40 or 50, saying that they can return, and we are acting on that. About the resolution [598], as you know, article 6 of the resolution says that the secretary general must appoint a group to designate the aggressor. And he is undertaking the preliminary steps in that regard. Article 7, too, involves a mission, and a group came here to assess the damage. That was a preliminary step. It also has a second stage, when figures must be stated. Those are the things that are taking place. As to what will happen afterwards, we are pursuing it. God willing, we will get good results. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. I also extend congratulations on the beginning of the government week to you and other government officials. In your remarks you referred to America's animosity, saying that hostilities still continue and the economic blockade is still in force. In the continuation of America's hostile attitude, we witness some poisonous propaganda on the hostage issue. Despite Iran's humanitarian efforts, the trend of hostage release has come to a halt. I wanted to know if you have anything new in that regard, or possibly in connection with the Iranian hostages?

[Rafsanjani] My understanding is that Israel is the main obstacle to hostage release. The reason is clear. Israel does not want the problems between the West, Lebanon, Iran, and other issues to be resolved. Israel creates obstructions. Israel holds 300 to 400 Lebanese in prisons. They are in fact hostages. They are not prisoners of war and they have not committed any offense for which they should have been arrested or tried. They have been kidnapped from Lebanon and taken prisoner. They have been kept in prisons. Israel is not prepared to release them.

America's influence on Israel is crucial. But we see that America does not use its influence; therefore we suspect America itself. If America wants something done, Israel does not dare refuse. Therefore we suspect America as well as Israel. In our opinion both of them are in question.

To be fair, the people of Lebanon showed bravery and voluntarily and without any condition freed two hostages. But we see that they [as heard] did not respond favorably. I believe the problem lies with the other side. There are no more problems on this side.

[Correspondent] Thank you. My second question is about the remarks made by the honorable leader [Khamene'i]. Another issue which he pointed out in his recent remarks was the necessity for various political wings [jenah-haye siasi] to reach an understanding. After the honorable leader made his remarks, two main political wings issued separate statements showing their support for his remarks. In your opinion, what are practical ways of achieving such understanding?

[Rafsanjani] One practical way is to stop abusing each other. It is a bad thing to accuse someone. It is very harmful to use harsh language. They should stop uttering those remarks. And the positive side of it is to say that they should sit and discuss the country's affairs and come to some common stance, where a common stance is required. Where a common stance is not required, then they should discuss issues in a critical manner via their own media. It is a beautiful thing to be able to sit together in a society and when I say something, you are free to stand up and say, I do not accept your remarks; your remarks are not acceptable for such reasons. That does not call for a dispute. Two human beings can discuss issues. It is finally society that makes its choice. If the aim is to win elections, then people realize and understand various remarks and vote for the person they approve when the time for election comes. We suppose both wings have good intentions and both want to render their services and both are revolutionies. There is no problem. What I do not understand is why they should attack each other. [passage omitted]

[Literary KEYHAN reporter] I would like to ask two political questions. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the amended Damascus accord on the region's security system was announced recently. What is your view on this, considering that the accord does not give Iran any role in the Persian Gulf region's security system?

[Rafsanjani] Our initial view was that bilateral relations with the regional states is what guarantees regional security. The relations must be sincere and there should be a feeling of confidence. And we do not accept the presence of states outside the region in the collective security measures. And the principled basis of our own presence in collective movements is the good relations between us and those states. If those relations reach a proper stage, naturally we will be present at collective movements.

[Reporter] My next question. Taking into consideration the progress achieved in relation to the American peace plan in the region, especially after the ending of the Persian Gulf war and the willingness of many Arab regimes to accept that plan, what results have been achieved from your requests to Arab and Islamic states, requests which have been made by letters dispatched through your envoys?

[Rafsanjani] We have not yet received replies from all those countries to which we sent a message. They are bringing them in little by little.

We sent them explicit messages, explaining the situation, and expressed our concern that in this move the Palestinians should not be deprived nor should the Israelis and the Americans reap all the benefits. We also conveyed some the ways to confront them. When all replies are received, the round-up of those replies, as much as is necessary, we will explain. In any case we will continue our work so that the Americans cannot exploit this juncture and so the Palestinians and Muslims are not duped.

[Correspondent] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. My first question concerns the invitation extended to Iranian experts and capitalists residing abroad. In view of the various reactions which this issue has met inside the country, would you please give us your opinion on this matter, and please pass on any messages you have for the Iranians abroad.

[Rafsanjani] The issue of invitation is nothing new. Ever since the outset [of the revolution], when the flight of the Iranians abroad started—after which they left gradually, taking their capital with them—we have always been against Iranians leaving the country. We do not wish our people to remain abroad, thus depriving the country of their resources. Meanwhile being influenced by the decadence abroad, the impact of which could affect our people and the Muslims. Our policy had always been that they should remain in the country. Those who have criminal records must naturally be dealt with justly, in courts like all other criminals, and those who have no criminal records should be at ease. The majority of those abroad have no criminal records, there are only a small number who may be criminals. What they now call invitation to the capitalists and so on, was an unsuitable move on the part of some individuals. Any individual, any Iranian willing to live in Iran under conditions of the revolution is welcome. This is our invitation and our message to them. Indeed we are upset to see Iranian children and Iranian families living in climates which may have adverse impacts on their future and prosperity. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The Turkish authorities recently announced that Kurds opposed to Turkey have fled to Iran via northern Iraq. In view of the Turkish attack against northern Iraq and their recent allegation regarding Iran—which has met Iran's silence—how do you view the prospects of Iran-Turkey relations?

[Rafsanjani] Most of these remarks were made by newspapers which, generally, disrupt our relations with Turkey. As far as we know there is no truth to this matter. After all, Turkey has attacked individuals inside the Iraqi territory, and they fled through some places to some other places. We guard our borders. Our borders have been closely guarded since the war. Now, if, for instance someone crosses a mountain or somewhere and comes to this side, or is lost in valleys, this is something which can happen on any border. The borders there are mountainous. We have guards, and the communication routes are not such to enable them to travel on roads. Certainly, this action was not a flood and no official Turkish authority has made such remarks. We, in turn, have told them that they were lies.

[Correspondent] Of course, this allegation was made by the Turkish [word indistinct].

[Rafsanjani] He made this remark on the basis of a newspaper report, whereby we told him to put forward any reasons they have. so far they have presented no reasons.

[Correspondent] America intends to impose a new security policy in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East, which includes the control of arms flow to the region. If this policy is imposed, what is the policy of Iran in providing for its arms needs from abroad?

[Rafsanjani] In one of my Friday sermons, I said that we do not see this being implemented in practice. Practically speaking, will Israel disarm? If they do, then its neighbors will disarm. Clearly, the Americans will not accept Israeli disarmament this early. If India does not disarm, will Pakistan [words indistinct]. Therefore, this is just talk and we do not take it very seriously. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Concerning population control, we have a figure concerning the immigration of foreign nationals. Has the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran taken any particular decisions to limit the comings and goings of foreign nationals?

[Rafsanjani] I suppose you know that the immigration that took place was not a natural affair. In Afghanistan that catastrophe took place and the people came to seek refuge with us. We could not turn away Muslims that were under so much pressure. The same thing occurred in Iraq. There was also a number [of refugees] from Iraq, they were mainly Iranians and now that the situation is getting better they are going back, a large number of them have already left. When the situation improves in those two other places, they will start going back. If these incidents do not occur around us, we will not have a problem with immigration.

Unfortunately, the region does not yet have stability, calm, and security and we are always concerned that

situations may arise. We, with our humane and Islamic spirits in our society, may face this problem again. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] My final question concerns relations with Iraq. Considering the debate on the resolution [598] and the recent problems, is the Islamic Republic of Iran still considering the re-establishment of relations or not? Thank you.

[Rafsanjani] Our principle is to have relations with Iraq regardless of the government in power. Iraq is our neighbor, its people are our brothers and sisters. The holy shrines are there. We cannot not have relations with the Iraqis. This is our principle. Well, the conditions are a bit difficult right now but we hope that they gradually improve.

Economic Memorandum of Understanding Signed

LD2708103191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] According to a memorandum signed in Tehran today at a meeting between the Iranian and Jordanian trade ministers, the two countries have agreed to cooperate in various economic, commercial and service sectors in view of existing capabilities and resources. In the talks between the two countries' economic delegations, the holding of exclusive exhibitions and participation in the two countries' international exhibitions, the establishment of air links between the two countries, and the means by which Iran can meet Jordan's needs for such goods as cars, fish, tobacco, and other goods were discussed.

Antiregime Demonstrations Reported in Tehran

TA2608095191 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 0330 GMT 25 Aug 91

[Text] Just as in previous days, Tehran yesterday witnessed widespread people's demonstrations against the Islamic Republic regime. According to the latest reports, in yesterday's demonstrations, which were staged in most of the city's neighborhoods and districts, the people chanted slogans against Khamene'i and Hashemi-Rafsanjani and in favor of the establishment of freedom and democracy, Reza Shah II, and the Flag of Freedom Organization. Our fellow combatants have reported that thousands of people demonstrated yesterday in and around Tehran's Fowziyeh Square as well as in Shahbaz Street while shouting "Death to the Islamic Republic regime."

Another report indicates that on 22 August the agents of Khamene'i and Hashemi-Rafsanjani set fire to several shops in Tehran's Naser Khosrow Street. Meanwhile, it has been reported that the prices of essential commodities have risen sharply in Tehran in recent days.

* Regime Backs Off After Demonstrations

91AS1285A London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Jul pp 1, 11

[Text] Following widespread demonstrations by the people of Tehran protesting the increase in the price of Vahed Company bus tickets all last week, with the streets of Tehran a stage for their protests, the regime hurriedly backed off, and upon the order of Rafsanjani, bus tickets returned to their previous prices.

Hasan Habibi, Rafsanjani's deputy president, announced: The price of bus tickets was increased independently. He warned those organizations that increase the rate of their goods and services without the approval of the Supreme Economic Council that they "will be dealt with decisively."

The people of Tehran boycotted the Vahed Company buses for three days. They marched on foot, shouting slogans against the mayor of Tehran and the officials who increased the ticket prices. An eyewitness to the demonstrations last week, which peaked for three days, said: The people walked calmly in the middle of the streets and sometimes sat in groups on the pavement and stopped traffic. But the drivers of private cars not only did not object but showed support for the demonstrators by turning on their headlights or getting ou' of their cars.

This eyewitness told KEYHAN: The people, whose numbers at times reached several thousand, avoided any sort of political slogans opposing the regime and advised each other not to give any excuse to the oppressing officials of the government [to attack the demonestrators]. Only occasionally in various spots did they join voices to condemn Tehran City Hall and the officials of the Vahed Company.

The events began when the Vahed Bus Company announced that in order to increase its revenues it had created several "special lines" which would travel nonstop the distance of several bus routes. But it increased the price of tickets on these "special lines" from 200 to 500 percent. Among those it increased the price of tickets of the "special line" from Arzhantin Square to Sepah Square from 20 to 50 rials. The new lines covered Fuziyyeh Square, Shahreza Street, Dowlatabad, Park-e Shahr [city park], Khaniabad-e Naw, Rah Ahan [railroad terminal], Pahlavi Street, Baharestan Square, "Jomhuri" (Shah) Street and "Azadi" (Shahyad) Square. As soon as they heard of the increase in the price of the express bus tickets, the people of Tehran found an excuse to engage in demonstrations in three areas of the capital. According to REUTER'S NEWS AGENCY, in the early hours of the demonstrations, there were clashes between demonstrators and guards (some of whom now wear the uniforms of the joint security forces), and the people set one bus on fire.

Following these demonstrations which occurred last Saturday on Shahyad (Azadi) Square, Baharestan Square and Shah (Jomhuri) Street, on Sunday, the protests

spread. On the same day, REUTER'S NEWS AGENCY, quoting JAHAN-E ESLAM, which is published by Hadi Khamenei, the brother of the "Leader of the revolution," reported: Thousands of people gathered in various parts of the capital shouting slogans against high prices, the shortage of essential goods and the mayor of Tehran. This report verified the clashes between the demonstrators and the security forces of the regime.

The regime, caught off guard by the sudden demonstrations of the people, first tried to put a stop to the incident by sending guards to suppress the demonstrators. It soon became evident, however, that any violent action would rip apart the capital, with a population of 10 million people, and the deep-seated discontent of the people would be revealed in a severe and uncontrollable form. Therefore, after about six hours, the government backed off and, issuing the order to its forces not to confront the demonstrators, announced that the prices of tickets would return to their previous prices. SALAM newspaper, which is published by "Mohammad Musavi-Kho'iniha," the extremist Hezbollah leader, wrote on its front page that the demonstrators at "Azadi" Square and Baharestan Square were quite politically seasoned.

Following the announcement that the action of the Vahed Company in increasing the bus ticket prices was unauthorized, a company spokesman said on Saturday afternoon (15 Tir [6 July]): "The above-mentioned project was implemented only for two days on a trial basis to provide an express service, and starting Thursday, the passengers on the above-mentioned routes will pay a 20-rial fare as before."

Prior to the demonstrations, there had been no mention by the Vahed Bus Company that the project was temporary. Concerning the statements of Habibi about the increase in the price of tickets being "unauthorized," the spokesman of the company said: "Because the project was implemented on a trial basis, we did not seek legal authorization."

Other reports from Iran indicate that the buses set afire by the demonstrators numbered three or four. Also, another unconfirmed report indicates that simultaneous with the Tehran demonstrations, unrest occurred in several other cities as well, including Tabriz.

The demonstrations and protests of the people of Tehran once again revealed the conflicts among the opposing factions in the governing groups of the Islamic Republic. While the newspapers supporting Rafsanjani and the government tried to downplay the demonstrations and, for instance, cited the numbers of demonstrators as 700 to 800 people, KEYHAN (Tehran) newspaper, which mostly leans towards the opponents of Rafsanjani, wrote that the number of those who had engaged in demonstrations out of dissatisfaction with public services and the high price of bus rates and other necessities, contrary to information given in the newspapers supporting the government, numbered more than 2,000 people. KEYHAN, published in Tehran, added that the reason for the demonstrations of the Tehran citizens could not merely be the increase in the rate of express bus fares; rather, overall shortages in the hot summer weather are the main cause of the people's protests.

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI newspaper also took the side of the demonstrators and, after attacking the officials, wrote that the people have had it with high prices, lack of money and unorganized public services. JAHAN-E ESLAM newspaper also wrote: Installing curtains or new seats in the express buses cannot justify the increase in the price of tickets. On the whole, all the various factions and centers of power tried, by taking sides with the people and blaming another organization, to prevent the demonstrations and not to mutually give an "excuse" to the people.

REUTER'S NEWS AGENCY wrote in an analysis of the unrest in Tehran:

The protest of the people of Tehran against the increase in the price of bus tickets indicates their extreme anger about the dreadful increase in prices, which in the opinion of many is the result of the recent economic changes imposed by the Rafsanjani government. Hundreds of Tehran citizens engaged in protests last Sunday in three large squares in Tehran and disrupted traffic for over an hour in the capital. The marchers shouted: You must lower the price of bus tickets. The Tehran newspapers regarded these demonstrations as unpremeditated and spontaneous. This is the first general action of the people of Iran declaring their discontent over the increase in the prices of essential public goods. The issue of high prices has been discussed since the beginning of the presidency of Hashemi-Rafsanjani. JAHAN-E ESLAM newspaper wrote this week: On the whole, the people are unhappy with the daily increase in prices. An article entitled "The Economic Policies of Hashemi-Rafsanjani," quoting the demonstrators, mentions that Mir Hoseyn Musavi, the former prime minister, during his tenure and even in the midst of the crisis of the war with Iraq, did not increase the prices of the public needs. But now, when there is neither war nor the huge expenditures of war, the price of everything goes up regularly.

REUTER'S, quoting economic experts, continued:

"The Iranian regime, as apart of the free market plan, has announced that the increase in the price of goods is legal in order to strengthen the profit margin of products and decrease the budget deficit remaining from the eight-year war. Among the items with price increases, diesel fuel has increased by 150 percent."

Pakistan

Arms Fire Exchanged With India Along Kashmir

BK2708162991 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] Small arms fire between Indian and Pakistani troops continued today in the Punch sector in Kashmir

where an Indian attack on a Pakistani post in Mirzapur was beaten back on Monday [26 August] morning. The Pakistani troops which inflicted heavy casualties on the Indian forces yesterday kept up the retaliatory fire without any let-up.

Meanwhile, during their routine hot line telephone contact today, the directors general of military operations of the two countries decided to defuse the situation and take effective steps to prevent escalation of tension along the Line of Control. APP [ASSOCIATE PRESS OF PAKISTAN] adds that in their failed attempt to capture a Pakistani post in Mirzapur on Monday, the Indians lost 20 lives including their two officers. The Pakistanis suffered two casualties.

Spokesman on Border Clashes

BK2808135491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1300 GMT 28 Aug 91

[Text] Pakistan is to raise the Kashmir issue at the nonaligned foreign ministers conference beginning at Accra in Ghana from the 4th of next month. It is aimed at increasing awareness among the international community of the problem with various dimensions and the need for its peaceful settlement in accordance with UN resolutions. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad today that a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute is an essential condition for improvement of India-Pakistan relations. The spokesman said that Afghan issue would also be considered by the NAM [Nonaligned Movement] conference and Pakistan would place its point of view for a political settlement to enable the refugees to return to their homestead.

Military officials of Pakistan and India have agreed to bring the situation under control on the Line of Control in Kashmir. Stating this, the Foreign Office spokesman confirmed that some clashes have taken place on the Line of Control. However, these were not of a serious nature. Relevant military officials of the two countries have been in contact with each other. Such [words indistinct] process during the normal time.

Official Leaves for Afghan Talks in Tehran

BK2708133691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1300 GMT 27 Aug 91

[Text] A five-member delegation led by the secretary general, foreign affairs, Mr. Akram Zaki, left Islamabad for Tehran this afternoon to represent Pakistan at the second round of tripartite talks on Afghanistan problem with Iran and Afghan mojahedin tanzimat [organizations]. Representatives of all those Afghan tanzimat who attended the first round of tripartite talks in Islamabad last month have also gone to the Iranian capital.

Talking to newsmen before departure, the secretary general, foreign affairs, said that this time some important developments have taken place, including the recent events in the Soviet Union where pro-democracy forces strengthened over reactionary elements. This, he said, would have positive effect on the efforts to seek a political settlement of the Afghanistan problem. Replying to another question, he said the final decision on the basis of right of self-determination and the type of government to be established in Afghanistan after the political settlement rested with the people of that country and minorities have no right to veto the decision of majority.